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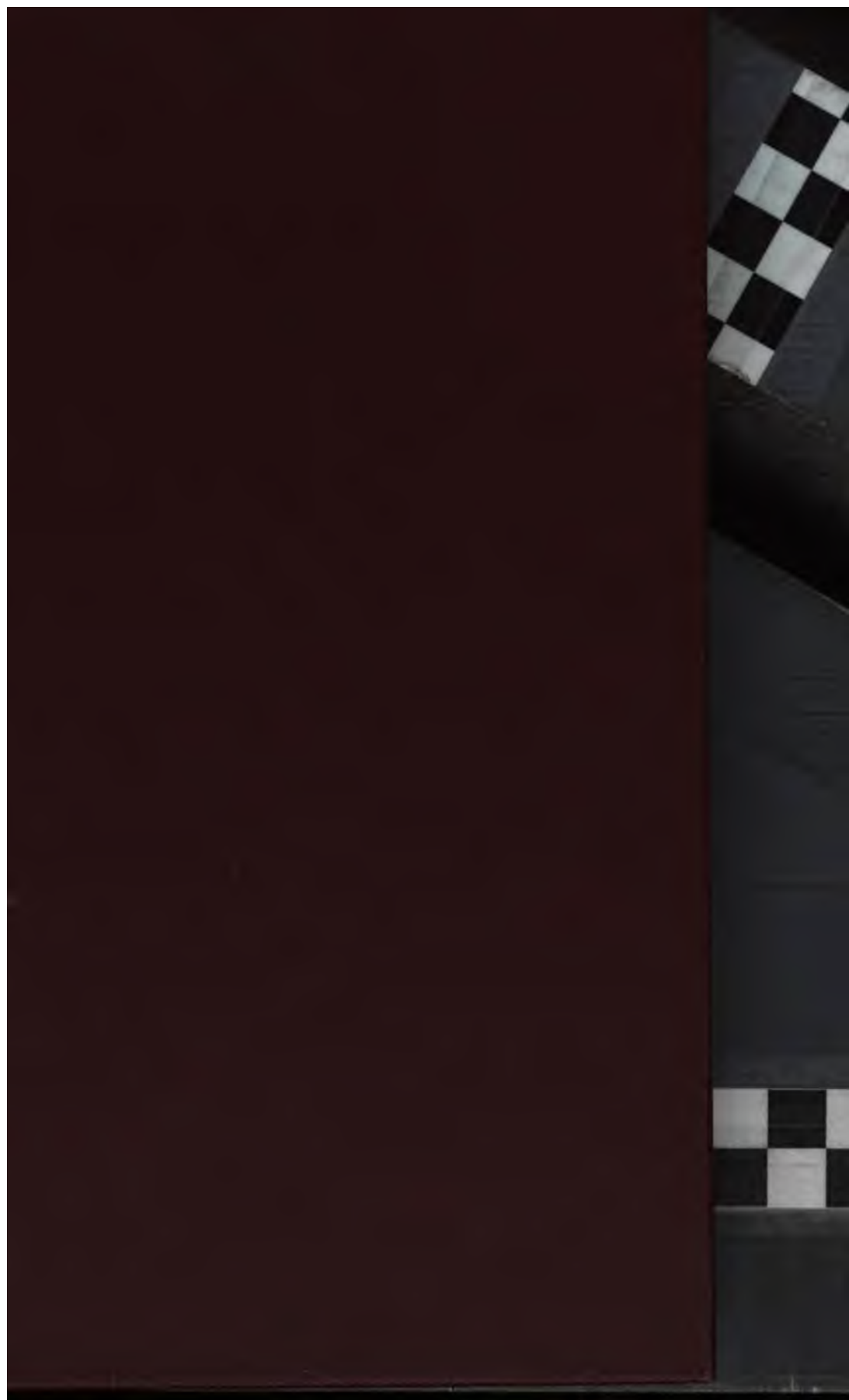
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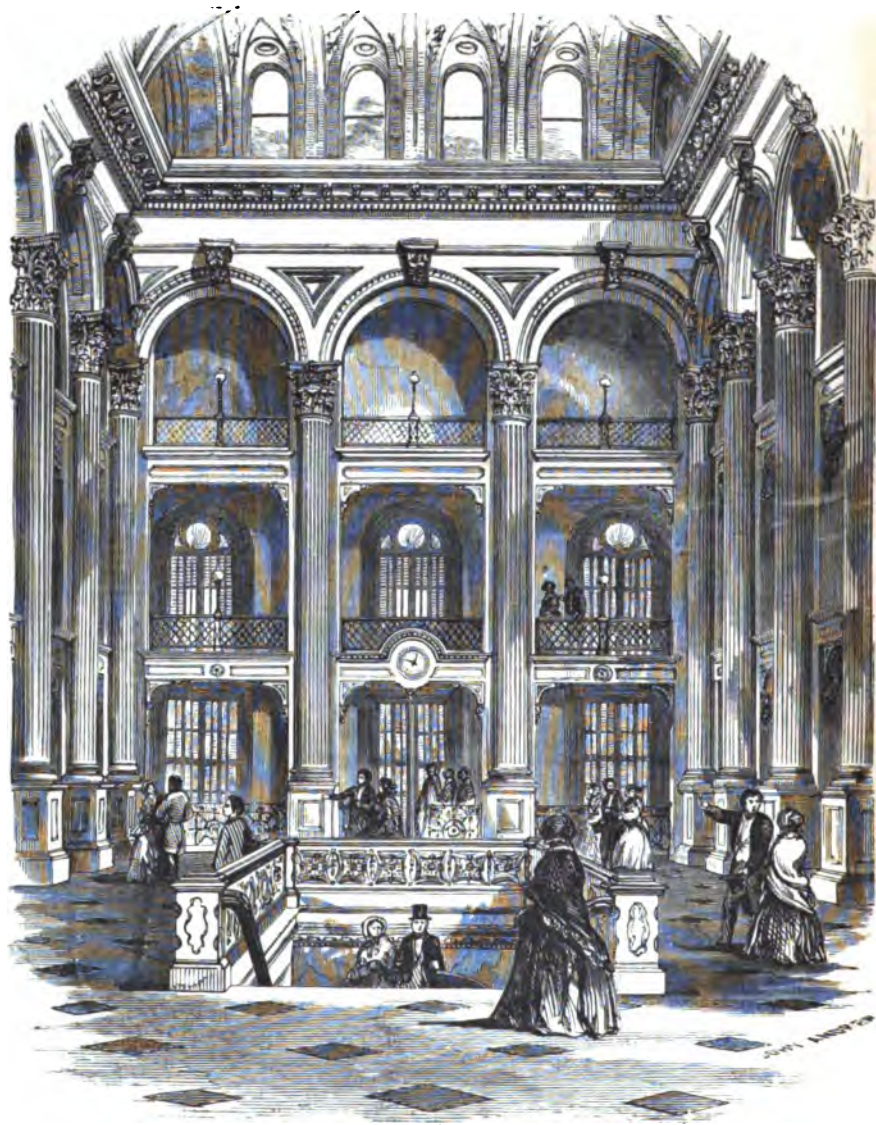
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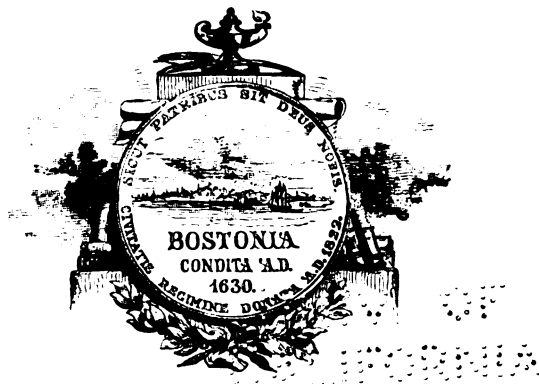
TO THE
LIBRARY



PRINTED
FREELY & OPENLY
BY AUTHORITY OF THE CITY COUNCIL
MDCCLXXII.

PROCEEDINGS
AT THE
DEDICATION OF THE BUILDING
FOR THE
PUBLIC LIBRARY
OF THE CITY OF BOSTON.
_h

JANUARY 1, 1858.



BOSTON:
PREPARED AND PRINTED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE CITY COUNCIL.
MDCCCLVIII.

Z73
B75P1

LIBRARY
SCHOOL

Gift
Miss Louise Katz.

TO THE
ALBANY

BOSTON:
GEO. C. RAND & AVERY,
PRINTERS TO THE CITY.

P R E F A C E.

THE account of the ceremonies attending the dedication of the Public Library Building, contained in the following pages, has been prepared in compliance with an order of the City Council, approved by the Mayor on the fourth day of January, 1858.

In the preparation of the body of the work and in superintending the passage of the whole through the press, the Committee, to whom the duty was assigned, are happy to acknowledge their indebtedness for valuable assistance to our fellow citizen, Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, M.D., who promptly and cordially acceded to their request that he would render such aid as his multiplied engagements might permit. His deserved reputation as an editor, especially his complete success in the preparation, for the City Council, of the "Franklin Statue Memorial," his unwearied attention to the interests of the Public Library, and to the details of its management, and the invaluable services rendered by him from its commencement, both as a Trustee

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ARRANGEMENTS.

DEDICATION
OF THE
PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDING
IN BOSTON.

ON the first day of January, 1858, the Building for the PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON was dedicated, in presence of a crowded assemblage of persons, by the city authorities, aided by the Commissioners who had been intrusted with its erection, and the Trustees to whom belonged the management of the institution. The weather was remarkably fine for the season of the year, and the occasion passed off most agreeably to those who were partakers in, or witnesses of, the highly interesting ceremonies. The arrangements were most admirably made, and were carried out with extraordinary precision and punctuality; which added much to the success of the whole affair, and gave great satisfaction to all persons concerned in the undertaking.

Two years and a few months only had elapsed since, on the seventeenth day of September, 1855, the corner stone of the building had been laid with appropriate exercises; and, perhaps, never in the history of the city have the portals of any of its edifices been opened to the public with more joy, or with greater promise of future usefulness and prospects of real benefit to the whole community, than in this instance; for, with a liberality unsurpassed by that of any of the other large cities of America, Boston, on the new year's day, gave to her citizens one of the most precious gifts within her power of bestowal—a noble building for the most free library in the world.

It is the object of the following pages to give a succinct account of the proceedings which took place on this joyous event.

ARRANGEMENTS.

PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS.

THE Commissioners on the erection of a building for the Public Library having expressed in their sixth report, presented to the City Council, on the thirtieth day of April, 1857, their hope to have every thing in sufficient forwardness to allow of the surrender of the keys to the city authorities on the seventeenth of September next ensuing, at a meeting of the Common Council held on the evening of the same day, OLIVER STEVENS, Esq., the President, in the chair, JOSEPH A. POND, Esq., one of the gentlemen who represented that branch of the government in the Board of Commissioners, offered the following order:—

CITY OF BOSTON.

In Common Council, April 30, 1857.

ORDERED, That a joint Special Committee, to consist of five members of this Board and such as the Board of Aldermen may join, be appointed to confer

with his Honor the Mayor and the Commissioners on the erection of the Public Library Building, with full power to make arrangements for the reception of the building, and also for all such ceremonies as may be appropriate for the dedication on the seventeenth day of September next, or on such other day as may be substituted therefor.

The order was passed, and sent to the Board of Aldermen for concurrence; and

Messrs. JOSEPH A. POND,
JOSEPH SMITH,
WILLIAM PARKMAN,
FREDERICK L. WASHBURN, and
FREEMAN M. JOSSELYN, JR.,

were appointed the committee.

At a regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen held on the afternoon of the fourth of May, the Chairman, PELHAM BONNEY, Esq., presiding, the action of the Common Council in reference to the above order was concurred in, and

Aldermen OLIVER FROST,
JOSEPH M. WIGHTMAN, and
SAMUEL HATCH,

were joined to the Committee. On the ensuing day the order received the approval of his Honor, ALEXANDER H. RICE, the Mayor.

Subsequently, at a meeting of the Common Council, held on the fourteenth day of May, 1857, the President in the chair, the Committee was enlarged by the addition of two members of the Common Council,

Messrs. JACOB A. DRESSER, and
JOSIAH B. RICHARDSON;

which fact was communicated to the Board of Aldermen on the eighteenth day of the same month, and the action of the Common Council was concurred in.

The Committee of Arrangements held their first meeting at City Hall, on Monday, the twenty-ninth day of June following; and, after having fully discussed various plans and propositions for celebrating the completion of the Public Library Building, appointed a sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. FROST, WIGHTMAN and POND, to confer with the Commissioners and with his Honor the Mayor, and report to the Committee the day for the dedication, and a program of the ceremonies deemed most appropriate.

In the Board of Commissioners, at a meeting held on the first day of July, 1857, the order of the City Council appointing a Committee of Arrangements having been read, and the desire of the Committee for a conference with the Board being known, it was thereupon

ORDERED, That the President, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, with Dr. NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF and SAMUEL G. WARD, Esq., be appointed a committee with full powers to confer with the Joint Special Committee appointed by the City Council to make arrangements for the reception and dedication of the Library Building.

The architect of the building, CHARLES K. KIRBY, Esq., having acquainted the Board with the fact that it would be impossible to complete it before the seventeenth of September, the day proposed for its dedication, the idea of giving up the keys on that day was abandoned. But, in a report submitted to the City Council by the Board, on the seventh of October following, the Commissioners stated that they had the assurance of the architect that the building would be completed before the close of the year. This being ascertained to be the case beyond any doubt, the President of the Board of Commissioners announced the fact to his Honor the Mayor on the tenth of the ensuing December, in a communication which was transmitted with the following letter to the City Council, for consideration and such action as might be deemed proper.

The letter of his Honor the Mayor was presented to the Board of Aldermen, at a special session of that body held on Thursday, the seventeenth day of December, Alderman BONNEY presiding.

MAYOR'S OFFICE.

BOSTON, DECEMBER 16, 1857.

To the Honorable City Council.

I have the honor herewith to transmit a communication from the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Erection of a Building for the Public Library, apprising the City Government of the completion of that building, and I await the action of the City Council thereon.

Very respectfully,

ALEXANDER H. RICE, *Mayor*.

The communication from the Commissioners, referred to by his Honor the Mayor in his letter, was as follows.

1 PEMBERTON SQUARE, 10 DEC., 1857.

HIS HONOR, A. H. RICE, *Mayor of Boston*.

MY DEAR SIR:—In my last communication to the City Council, in behalf of the Commissioners for Building the Public Library, I expressed the confident belief, which was entertained by the Board, that we should be able to complete our work within the present year.

I am happy now to be able to say that the building will be in readiness for surrender to the city on the first day of January next, and I have the honor,

in the name of the Commissioners, to invite the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council to visit the building at such hour on that day as may be most convenient to themselves, with such guests as they may think fit to bring with them, in order that the work may be inspected and the keys delivered up in due form.

I am, Dear Sir,

With great respect and regard,

Very faithfully, your obedient servant,

ROBERT C. WINTHROP, *President of the Board.*

The communication from the Mayor and the accompanying letter were referred to the Special Committee of the City Council, who had the subject of dedication under consideration.

The Committee of Arrangements commenced at once making active preparations for the dedication of the building in a suitable and becoming manner; and, in order to facilitate matters in particular arrangements, appointed from their own number the following

SUB-COMMITTEES.

ON ORDER OF EXERCISES:—Messrs. Frost, Pond and Dresser.

ON INVITATIONS:—Messrs. Frost, Parkman and Smith.

ON MUSIC:—Messrs. Wightman, Richardson and Dresser.

ON MARSHALS:—Messrs. Hatch, Smith and Pond.

ON CHAPLAINS:—Messrs. Wightman, Dresser and Parkman.

ON SEATS AND PLATFORMS:—Messrs. Hatch, Washburn and Richardson.

ON DECORATIONS:—Messrs. Hatch, Josselyn and Richardson.

ON ENTERTAINMENT:—Messrs. Hatch, Pond and Parkman.

The various matters of detail were referred to the several sub-committees above named, and the duties devolving on each were actively commenced.

An invitation to officiate as Chief Marshal on the occasion was tendered, in the accompanying letter, to Captain J. PUTNAM BRADLEE.

CITY HALL, BOSTON, DEC. 18, 1857.

DEAR SIR:—The Committee of Arrangements for the dedication of the Public Library Building have unanimously selected you as the Chief Marshal upon that occasion. It gives me pleasure to be the organ of communication, and to request your acceptance of that trust.

The sub-committee on marshals are now in session at the City Hall, and, if agreeable to yourself, would

be happy to meet you for the purpose of completing the necessary arrangements.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL HATCH, *Chairman of the Sub-Committee.*

To the above invitation Captain BRADLEE promptly responded in person, and, after a short consultation with the sub-committee, announced his acceptance of the appointment, and commenced immediately making the necessary preparations.

With his accustomed gallantry, Captain CHARLES O. ROGERS, of the Boston Light Infantry, tendered the services of the corps under his command, to perform escort. His letter was as follows.

BOSTON, DECEMBER 19, 1857.

GENTLEMEN:— Understanding that the Committee of the City Government having in charge the arrangements for the dedication of the new building for the Public Library propose to have a procession on the occasion, I embrace the earliest opportunity to tender the services of the Boston Light Infantry as an escort. The corps remember with gratitude the kindness and encouragement extended to them by the present City Government, and will esteem it an honor and a privilege to aid in the ceremonies intended to celebrate

- the completion, during its administration of the affairs of the City, of one of Boston's noblest monuments—the Public Library.

In behalf of the Boston Light Infantry, I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,

CHARLES O. ROGERS, *Captain B. L. I.*

To Joint Special Committee, &c.

The services so opportunely offered were gratefully accepted by the committee, and thanks presented therefor; and Col. Frost, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, signified the same by replying in the following words.

CITY HALL, BOSTON, DEC. 22, 1857.

CAPT. CHARLES O. ROGERS,

Commander Boston Light Infantry.

SIR:—In behalf of the Committee of Arrangements for the dedication of the Public Library Building, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your courteous note of the 19th instant, tendering the services of the gallant corps under your command for the performance of escort duty on the first of January next. In reply thereto, I am directed by the Committee to say that, while they had not contemplated a military escort to the procession, yet they very

gratefully accept the same in the cordial and reciprocal spirit of kindness which has dictated your generous offer.

If anything could add to the pleasure of the Committee in being enabled to avail themselves of your services on the approaching occasion, it is the recollection of the high standard of military discipline and soldierly bearing of your command, witnessed on former occasions by the City Council.

You will please report, with your command, precisely at three and a half o'clock, on the afternoon of the day above named, at the City Hall, School street, to J. Putnam Bradlee, Esq., Chief Marshal.

The Boston Brigade Band will be placed under your orders by the Committee.

Yours, very respectfully,

OLIVER FROST, *Chairman.*

The Committee communicated, through their chairman, to Hon. EDWARD EVERETT, President of the Board of Trustees of the Public Library, a certified copy of the proceedings of the City Council in relation to the dedication of the building; to which he replied as follows.

BOSTON, 24 DEC., 1857.

DEAR SIR:—I have received your letter relative to the dedication of the Public Library, and transmit

ing a certified copy of the proceedings of the City Council on that subject.

I lost no time in laying these papers before the Trustees, and I enclose herewith a copy of the votes passed by them on the occasion.

I beg leave to state, for the information of the Committee, that the Trustees will not fail to be in attendance on the City Council on the 1st of January next, in pursuance of the arrangements for the dedication of the Public Library.

I remain, dear sir, very respectfully yours,

EDWARD EVERETT.

Oliver Frost, Esq.

The action taken by the Trustees is given in the following orders, passed at a regular stated meeting of the Board.

CITY OF BOSTON.

In Board of Trustees of the Public Library, Dec. 21, 1857.

ORDERED, That the President be requested to notify the Chairman of the Joint Standing Committee of the City Council on the reception of the Library Building, that the Trustees will cheerfully coöperate with the Committee in any arrangement they may make for the reception and dedication of the Library Building.

ORDERED, That the President be requested, in behalf of the Trustees, to receive from his Honor the Mayor

the keys of the new Library Building, in accordance with the program proposed by the Committee of Arrangements.

Attest :

EDWARD CAPEN, *Secretary.*

Alderman FROST, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, to whom the letter of Mayor RICE, together with the communication of the Commissioners, was referred on the seventeenth day of December, submitted the following report at a meeting of the Board of Aldermen, held on the twenty-eighth day of the same month.

CITY OF BOSTON.

In Board of Aldermen, Dec. 28, 1857.

The Special Committee, to which was referred the communication of his Honor the Mayor, of the sixteenth instant, enclosing a letter from the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, President of the Board of Commissioners for building the Public Library, informing the City Council, in behalf of the Commissioners, that the building will be in readiness for surrender to the City on the first day of January next, and inviting the Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council to visit the building at such hour on that day as may be most convenient to themselves, with such guests as they may think fit to bring with them, in order that the work may be

inspected and the keys delivered up in due form, ask leave respectfully to report,

That the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council, with the Trustees of the Public Library, and other guests, will meet the Commissioners at the Library Building on the first day of January next, at four o'clock, P.M., precisely, and await the pleasure of the Commissioners in relation to the order of exercises on that interesting event.

For the Committee,

OLIVER FROST, *Chairman.*

The above report was read, accepted, and sent down for concurrence; and at a meeting of the Common Council held on the thirty-first of December, the action of the Board of Aldermen was concurred in.

The arrangements having been thus far accomplished, an order of exercises was submitted to the committee, and referred to the appropriate sub-committee and finally adopted. The following letter of invitation was sent to such a number of persons as could be admitted comfortably within the principal hall of the new library building, and accompanying it were cards of admission to the various parts of the hall.

CITY OF BOSTON: DEDICATION OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

SIR:—The ceremonies of dedication of the Public Library will take place in the new library hall, in Boylston street, on Friday, Jan. 1, 1858, at 4 o'clock, P.M.

You are respectfully invited to be present on the occasion, and to join the procession of the City Government and their invited guests, at the City Hall, at 3 P.M., on that day.

OLIVER FROST,
JOSEPH M. WIGHTMAN,
SAMUEL HATCH,
JOSEPH A. POND,
JOSEPH SMITH,
WILLIAM PARKMAN,
FREDERICK L. WASHBURN,
FREEMAN M. JOSSELYN, JR.,
JACOB A. DRESSER,
JOSIAH B. RICHARDSON,
Committee of Arrangements.

The whole number of tickets issued were three thousand, half of which were to gentlemen, and half to ladies; and it is believed that very nearly all were used. In order to prevent confusion in seating the company, the tickets to the various parts of the hall were printed on cards of different colors.

The following announcement was promulgated by the Committee of Arrangements and the Chief Marshal a few days before the ceremonies took place.

CITY OF BOSTON: CEREMONIES ON THE OCCASION OF THE
DEDICATION OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDING, BOYL-
STON STREET, JANUARY 1, 1858.

COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

ALDERMEN.

OLIVER FROST, JOSEPH M. WIGHTMAN,
SAMUEL HATCH.

COMMON COUNCIL.

JOSEPH A. POND, FREDERICK L. WASHBURN,
JOSEPH SMITH, FREEMAN M. JOSSELYN, JR.,
WILLIAM PARKMAN, JACOB A. DRESSER,
JOSIAH B. RICHARDSON.

COMMISSIONERS ON THE ERECTION OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDING.

ROBERT C. WINTHROP, *President*,
SAMUEL G. WARD, PELHAM BONNEY,
NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF, JOSEPH A. POND,
EDWARD EVERETT, WILLIAM PARKMAN.

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

EDWARD EVERETT, *President*,
GEORGE TICKNOR, WILLIAM W. GREENOUGH,
JOHN P. BIGELOW, OLIVER FROST,
NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF, FREDERICK L. WASHBURN.

DEDICATION OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDING.

The Commissioners on the erection of the building for the Public Library having fulfilled their trust, and being prepared to surrender the same to the City Government, the public ceremonies of Dedication will take place at the Library Building, on Boylston street, on Friday, January 1st, 1858.

The City Authorities and invited guests will assemble at three o'clock, P.M., at City Hall, School street. At three and a half o'clock a procession will be formed, and proceed, under escort of the Boston Light Infantry, who have volunteered their services upon the occasion, to the Library Building, where the Commissioners will be in waiting, when appropriate exercises will take place.

ORDER OF PROCESSION.

The procession will move in the following order :

MILITARY ESCORT.

Company A, Boston Light Infantry, Captain Charles O. Rogers, with the Boston Brigade Band.

AID. Chief Marshal. AID.

Flagg's Cornet Band.

Chief of Police.

Committee of Arrangements.

AID. His Honor, the Mayor. AID.

Trustees of the Public Library.

Chaplains.

Chairman and Members of the Board of Aldermen.

President and Members of the Common Council.

City Clerk and Clerk of the Common Council.

Messenger and Assistant Messenger to the City Council.

City Solicitor, Treasurer, Auditor, and City Engineer.

Benefactors and Contributors to the Public Library.

Librarian and Assistants.

The Architect, Contractors, and Master Mechanics employed in the erection of the Library Building.

AID. His Honor, the Mayor elect. AID.

Members elect of the Board of Aldermen.

Members elect of the Common Council.

Past Mayors of Boston.

Past Chairmen of the Board of Aldermen.

Past Presidents of the Common Council.

Past Commissioners of the Library Building.

Past Trustees of the Library.

School Committee.

Superintendent of the Public Schools.

Instructors of the Public Schools.

Sheriff of Suffolk.

AID. His Excellency, the Governor of Massachusetts and Staff, and Adjutant General. AID.

His Honor, the Lieutenant Governor, and Executive Council.

Secretary, Treasurer, and Auditor of the Commonwealth.

Sergeant at Arms.

His Excellency the Governor elect, and His Honor the Lieutenant Governor elect.

Members elect from Suffolk of the Massachusetts Legislature for 1858.

President and Fellows of Harvard College.

Faculty and Librarian of Harvard College.

Secretary of the Board of Education.

Attorney General.

Judges and other Officers of the Supreme Judicial Court, the Superior Court, the Court of Common Pleas, Probate and Police Courts.

District Attorney and Assistant District Attorney for the County of Suffolk.

Registers of Deeds and Probate.

United States Marshal.

AID. Judges and other Officers of the U. S. Courts. AID.

Postmaster and United States Attorney.

Collector of the Port and Deputies.

Naval Officer and Surveyor of the Port.

Navy Agent and Naval Storekeeper.

Commissioners of the United States Courts.

The Board of Directors for Public Institutions.

Cochituate Water Board.

The Board of Public Land Commissioners.

Chief and Assistant Engineers and Secretary of the Fire Department.

City, Port, and Consulting Physicians.

Harbor Master.

Assessors.

City Registrar and Water Registrar.

Superintendents of Public Buildings, Streets, Lands, Market, Lamps, Health, Sewers, Bridges, Fire Alarms, &c.

Assistant Superintendent of Health, and Surveyor General of Lumber.

Other City Officers and Clerks in the various City Offices.

City Governments of Roxbury, Cambridge, Charlestown, and Chelsea.

Officers of the following Associations, viz :

American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Massachusetts Historical Society.

Boston Society of Natural History.

New England Historic-Genealogical Society.

Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association.

American Statistical Association.

Boston Athenæum.

Boston Library Society.

Mercantile Library Association.

Mechanic Apprentices Library Association.

Mattapan Literary Association.

Franklin Literary Association.

Latin School Association.

English High School Association.

Boston Young Men's Christian Association.

Boston Young Men's Christian Union.

Officers of other Scientific, Literary and Historical Associations.

Other invited Guests.

ROUTE OF THE PROCESSION.

From City Hall, through School, Beacon, Park, Tremont and Boylston streets, to the Library Building.

ORDER OF EXERCISES AT THE LIBRARY BUILDING.

1. Voluntary, by Flagg's Cornet Band.
2. Address, by Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, President of the Board of Commissioners on the Erection of the Library Building, on delivering the keys to the Mayor.
3. Address, in reply, by His Honor, Alexander H. Rice, Mayor of Boston.
4. Hymn.
5. Prayer of Dedication, by Rev. Baron Stow, D.D.
6. Anthem.

7. Presentation of the Keys, by the Mayor, to the Board of Trustees of the Public Library, and Address of Reception, by Hon. Edward Everett, President of the Board.

8. Hymn. The audience are requested to unite in the singing.

9. Benediction, by Rev. Arthur B. Fuller.

The singing will be performed by a large choir selected from the Girls' High and Normal School, under the direction of Mr. Charles Butler.

The library building will be open from two to three and a half o'clock, for the admission of ladies only, with tickets, to the galleries.

Gentlemen invited to participate in the ceremonies must join the procession at City Hall.

Admission to the library building will be strictly confined to persons uniting in the procession, and cards of invitation must be exhibited at the entrance.

No person will be allowed to join the procession on the route.

The limited capacity of the hall will compel the Committee of Arrangements to enforce these rules.

During the evening the front of the building will be brilliantly illuminated with a transparency and gas pipes prepared for the purpose, and appropriately arranged.

At the conclusion of the services, the building will be thrown open for inspection by the city authorities.

The gentlemen named below have been appointed to act as Assistants to the Chief Marshal, for the procession, on the afternoon of January 1st, viz :

MARSHALS.

CHARLES H. ALLEN,	J. THOMAS SMITH,
J. AVERY RICHARDS,	ALBERT F. SISE,
FARNHAM PLUMMER,	CHARLES O. RICH,
GEORGE I. ROBINSON,	SAMUEL B. KROGMAN,
CHARLES J. B. MOULTON,	FRANCIS INGERSOLL.

The following named gentlemen have been appointed to act as marshals in the Library Building. To them have been intrusted all the arrangements for seating persons presenting cards of admission, viz :

GRANVILLE MEARS, *Chief Marshal.*

ASSISTANTS.

GEORGE H. CHICKERING,	W. RALPH EMERSON,
CHARLES A. SMITH,	NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF, Jr.,
DAVID F. MCGILVERAY,	DAVID R. WHITNEY,
GEORGE H. KINGSBURY,	JOHN F. ANDERSON,
WILLIAM C. WILLIAMSON,	WILLIAM B. SEWALL,
J. WILLARD RICE,	A. SIDNEY EVERETT.

J. PUTNAM BRADLEE, *Chief Marshal.*

The foregoing particulars, besides being published in the daily newspapers, were printed, together with the hymns that were to be sung by the choir, in a pamphlet for the use of the Marshals and others.

That there might be no impediment to the procession during its passage from the City Hall to the Library Building in Boylston street, the subjoined order was offered and passed in the Board of Aldermen, and an ample number of policemen were detailed to carry the same into effect.

CITY OF BOSTON.

In Board of Aldermen, December 28, 1857.

ORDERED, That the Chief of Police be, and he is hereby, authorized to clear the following streets from public travel, during the formation and progress of

the municipal procession, on the afternoon of January 1st, 1858, viz :

School street, Beacon street from Tremont to Park, Park street from Beacon to Tremont, Tremont street from Park to Boylston, and Boylston street from Tremont street to the Public Library Building.

Read and passed.

Attest :

SAMUEL F. McCLEARY, *City Clerk.*

The special arrangements at City Hall were intrusted, by the Committee of Arrangements, to OLIVER H. SPURR, Esq., the courteous and efficient City Messenger, to whose zealous coöperation and indefatigable efforts they were greatly indebted.

Owing to the limited amount of space that could be used for the accommodation of persons in the great hall of the Library Building, the number of tickets issued for the admission of the public, on the occasion of the dedication, was much less than the demand. These were equally divided between the sexes, the gentlemen being provided with places in the area, while the alcoves, both on the floor and in the galleries, were assigned to the ladies.

The external part of the building was decorated with a transparency of the city seal, painted by Mr. William Schutz, and illuminated with gas, exhibiting

in letters of fire, the words, "Public Library, 1858." The effect produced by the decorations was admirable, especially in the evening, when the illumination was very attractive. The fixtures for this purpose were made by Messrs. S. A. Stetson & Co., with reference to future use on public holidays.

The preliminary arrangements for the dedication, made as described in the foregoing pages, proved to be unexceptionable, and were carried out with the greatest precision and care. The day selected for the interesting ceremonies being one of the city holidays, the public schools were closed, as were also such of the public offices as convenience did not require to be kept open.



CEREMONIES.

CEREMONIES.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, on Friday, the first day of January, 1858, the City Authorities with their invited guests, numbering about fifteen hundred persons, assembled in City Hall, and at half past three o'clock, precisely, in accordance with the published notices, the procession was formed under the direction of J. PUTNAM BRADLEE, Esq., Chief Marshal, assisted by the following gentlemen, who acted as assistants:— Messrs. Charles H. Allen, J. Avery Richards, Farnham Plummer, George I. Robinson, Charles J. B. Moulton, J. Thomas Smith, Albert F. Sise, Charles O. Rich, Samuel B. Krogman, and Francis Ingersoll. After being formed four deep, the procession moved to the square in front of the City Hall, where it awaited the arrival of the escort,— the Boston Light Infantry, under the command of Captain CHARLES O. ROGERS,— which, punctually at the hour appointed, entered School street and formed in order for the escort. The Light Infantry wore their regimental overcoats,

and numbered ninety-one guns. The appearance of this corps was such as to elicit the warmest expressions of approbation from all who witnessed their martial and gallant bearing. They were accompanied by the Boston Brigade Band, Mr. E. H. Weston, leader.

Without the least delay, the procession moved to the new Library Building in Boylston street, passing through School, Beacon, Park, Tremont, and Boylston streets, which, throughout the whole route, were lined with spectators of both sexes, among whom, however, the ladies predominated in number. Just as the clock of Park street church struck four, the procession halted in Boylston street, and at its arrival in the principal hall of the Library Building, which was arranged for the exercises, the City Authorities and their guests were met by the Commissioners, through whose direction and superintendence the building had been erected.

Already the ladies and several others of the invited guests had assembled in the hall. As the procession entered, a voluntary,—Rossini's overture to Mahomet II.,—was performed by Flagg's Cornet Band, twenty pieces, under the leadership of Mr. B. F. Richardson.

At the northerly end of the hall was a raised platform, decorated with several magnificent bouquets of natural flowers, the gift of Mr. John Galvin, the city


forester. This was occupied during the exercises by his Honor Mayor Rice, Hon. Frederic W. Lincoln, Jr., the mayor elect, the Committee of Arrangements, the Board of Commissioners for the erection of the building, the Board of Trustees for the management of the library, the chaplains, and several of the ex-mayors. Of the past chief magistrates of the city who were present on this occasion were the honorable and venerable Josiah Quincy, senior, Hon. Samuel A. Eliot, Hon. Josiah Quincy, junior, Hon. John P. Bigelow, and Hon. Jerome V. C. Smith. At the left of the mayor were seated the Commissioners, on his right the Trustees, and at the back part of the stage the Committee of Arrangements. In the immediate neighborhood of these were the members of the City Council, and Messrs. Charles Woodberry, George W. Warren, Edward F. Porter and Joseph Buckley, past Commissioners, and Messrs. Farnham Plummer, Sampson Reed, Abel Monroe and Joseph Story, past Trustees. Immediately in front of the platform were seated many aged citizens, and benefactors of the library.

After the voluntary by the Band, Hon. OLIVER FROST, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, rose, and announced to the Board of Commissioners the presence of the City Council, in the following words: —

MR. PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: The City Council have formally accepted your courteous invitation to be present to-day, to receive from your hands this beautiful temple, now to be dedicated to the cause of popular and public education, and to the free use of all our people; and to participate in the interesting ceremonies by which the people of Boston are about to receive, in its present magnificent form, this their noble new year's gift to the present and all succeeding generations. It is my pleasing duty, in behalf of the Committee of Arrangements, to announce to you that His Honor the Mayor, with the members of the Board of Aldermen and the Common Council, and as many citizens and invited guests as this spacious hall and these galleries can accommodate, are now in attendance.

His Honor the Mayor will represent the City Council and the citizens, and awaits your pleasure in the further ceremonies of this most happy new year's festival.

Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, President of the Board of Commissioners on the erection of the library building, then rose, and on delivering the keys to the Mayor, spoke as follows:—



MR. WINTHROP'S ADDRESS.

It may, perhaps, have been anticipated, fellow-citizens, that in pronouncing the first formal word on an occasion like the present—as it is my official privilege to do—that in uttering the first articulate sentences which will have broken the silence of these secluded alcoves, and waked an echo along these vaulted ceilings—I should at once avail myself of the opportunity to give expression to some of those lofty and swelling sentiments, which can hardly fail to be excited in every thoughtful and generous breast, by the most cursory consideration of the objects for which this building has been erected.

And, certainly, the opportunity is a most tempting one. Certainly, the scene before us is of a character to kindle emotions of more than common depth, and to inspire a strain of more than ordinary exultation.

Nor can I refrain from yielding to the impulses of the hour, so far, at least, as to bid you all welcome to this hall of good hope.

Welcome, fathers and mothers of our city: welcome, young ladies and children of the schools: welcome, lovers and patrons of literature and learning, of science and the arts: welcome, friends to good manners and good morals, and to those innocent recreations and ennobling pursuits by which alone vulgarity and vice can be supplanted: welcome, pastors and teachers of our churches and colleges: welcome, rulers and magistrates of our city, of our commonwealth, and of our whole country: welcome, citizens and residents of Boston, one and all, to an edifice which is destined, we trust, to furnish a resort, in many an hour of leisure and in many an hour of study, not for yourselves alone, but for those who shall come after you through countless generations; and where shall constantly be spread, and constantly be served, without money and without price, an entertainment ever fresh, ever abundant, and ever worthy of intelligent and enlightened freemen.

But I may not forget, fellow-citizens, that the peculiar duty, devolving upon me at this moment, is rather that of submitting something in the nature of an official report, than of attempting an occasional or holiday address.

I am sensible, too, that there are others on this platform, from whose lips the felicitations and exultations of the hour will fall more gracefully and more impressively than from my own, and to whom, indeed,

when the building shall once have been surrendered to the city, they will more appropriately belong.

I pray your indulgence, therefore, while I proceed, without further preamble, to a statement which is due to others as well as to myself,— which is demanded alike by my relations to the city, to my associates, and to all who have been employed on the work which we are here to inaugurate. And if, in the progress of that statement, or at its close, I should be found again indulging in a digression or an episode not quite within the accustomed limits of a business communication, you will all pardon it, I am sure, to the emotions, which no citizen of Boston, or certainly no native son of Boston, under such circumstances and with such surroundings, would find it easy, or even possible, altogether to repress.

Mr. Mayor, and gentlemen of the City Council:—

On the twenty-seventh day of November, 1854, the Chief Magistrate of our city, for the time being, gave his official sanction and signature to a municipal ordinance, “For the establishment of a Board of Commissioners on the erection of a building for the Public Library of the City of Boston.”

On the twentieth of December following, that Board was organized, and entered at once on the discharge of its duties.

On the twenty-sixth of January, 1855, a public

notice was issued to the architects of Boston, inviting them to furnish designs and estimates for the building, agreeably to the requirements which had been carefully considered and agreed upon by the Commissioners.

On the twenty-seventh of April thereafter — no less than four and twenty designs having in the mean time been received and examined — that of Mr. Charles K. Kirby was selected, as entitled to the preference, and as the basis of all further proceedings, by the votes of a majority of the Board.

On the fifteenth of May, Mr. Kirby's design having undergone such modifications as the Commissioners deemed desirable, sealed proposals were invited, by a public advertisement, for the brick, stone and iron work, and for all the other materials and labor, necessary to complete the exterior of the proposed edifice.

On the fourteenth day of June, the Commissioners entered into a contract for constructing the entire framework of the building, with Mr. Nathan Drake, an experienced mechanic of Boston, whose proposals were adjudged to be, upon the whole, the most favorable for the city.

On the seventeenth day of September, 1855, — it being the two hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the birthday of Boston, — the corner-stone of the structure was laid, with simple but solemn and appropriate ceremonies, in presence of the municipal author-

ities and of a great multitude of the people, by His Honor Jerome V. C. Smith, then Mayor of the City.

On the twenty-eighth of April, 1856, sealed proposals were invited, by another public notice, for furnishing the materials and performing the work required for the interior construction and finish of the building, agreeably to plans and specifications which had been carefully prepared by the architect and approved by the Board.

On the succeeding twenty-third day of July, contracts were signed by the Commissioners with Messrs. Morrison & Shaw, carpenters; with Messrs. Denio & Roberts, blacksmiths; with Messrs. Wentworth & Co., marble workers; with Messrs. Philip & Thomas Kelley, plaster and stucco workers; with Mr. Lucius Newell, painter and glazier; with Mr. Andrew J. Gavett, brass founder; and with Messrs. Strater & Buckley, plumbers,— for furnishing the materials and performing the work pertaining to their respective departments of Mechanic Art.

On the twentieth of May, 1857, another contract was entered into with Messrs. Morrison & Shaw, for preparing and setting up, agreeably to the admirable system of Dr. Shurtleff, all the shelving, which it was thought best to have arranged and set up at present, in both stories of the building. On the same day a contract was made with Mr. William Schutz, for painting and decorating the walls and ceilings of the vesti-

bule and principal apartments on the lower story ; and on the nineteenth of June following, a similar contract was signed with the same artist for tinting and ornamenting this large library hall.

Several small contracts for incidental work, not important to be mentioned on this occasion, have been subsequently entered into by the Board.

And now, at length, Mr. Mayor and gentlemen, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord, 1858,—in the year of our city, (*anno urbis conditæ*), 228,—in the year of the independence of our beloved country, 82,—your Commissioners have the happiness to announce, that these contracts have all been substantially fulfilled, and that the work committed to them has been accomplished ; and they are here to exhibit the finished edifice to the authorities of the city, to deliver up the keys to His Honor the Mayor, and to ask for themselves, that, so soon as a few little matters of fixture or of furniture shall have been arranged, and so soon as their accounts shall have been duly audited and settled, they may receive an honorable discharge from the service in which they have so long been engaged.

It was at one time contemplated by the City Council,—as you are well aware, sir,—that this surrender of the building should be attended with a more stately ceremonial and a more sumptuous display than are witnessed here to-day ; and it was confidently hoped

by the Commissioners, that every thing would be in readiness for that purpose on the seventeenth day of September last;—so that the same memorable municipal anniversary which had been so auspiciously associated with the commencement of the structure, might witness also its final completion and dedication.

But unavoidable delays—unavoidable, certainly, so far as the Commissioners were concerned, and arising, in great part, from the interruption occasioned by the unusual length and severity of the last two winters—have postponed this consummation until the present moment;—and now, I need hardly say that anything of elaborate out-door pageant and parade would have been alike uncongenial with the season of the year and with the circumstances of the times.


But the Commissioners were of opinion that nothing less could be done on their part, before resigning their trust, than to invite the constituted authorities of the city, with such guests as they might think fit to bring with them, to visit and view the building; to examine and thoroughly inspect the work, which has at last been finished; and to assume and exercise the responsibility—which rightfully belongs to them, and to them alone—of transferring it to the custody of the Trustees of the Library, and of solemnly dedicating it to the noble uses for which it was designed.

And most happily, fellow-citizens,—most happily for us all,—this new year's holiday has presented

itself at the precise moment when our preparations were completed, as at once the most convenient and the most appropriate day for such a purpose; enabling us to associate all the joyous emotions, all the friendly greetings, all the cordial congratulations, and all the grateful thanksgivings, too, which belong to the opening of another of these larger periods of our lives,—to associate and identify them all with an occasion, from which is destined to be dated, as we trust, the opening of a new era in the opportunities and advantages of the people of Boston, for carrying on the great work of self-education, of mutual improvement, and of moral, intellectual and spiritual culture.

I am persuaded, Mr. Mayor, that you could have desired no more delightful conclusion to the honorable and faithful service which you have rendered to the city as its Chief Magistrate, for two years past, than to be the medium of presenting to your fellow-citizens such a new year's gift as I am here to deliver over to you for that purpose.

I need hardly remind you, sir, that this substantial and spacious building owes its existence exclusively to the enlightened liberality of that municipal government over which, for a few days longer, at least, it is your privilege to preside. And I avail myself of the earliest opportunity to acknowledge most gratefully, in behalf of the Board of Commissioners as now composed, and of all who have been associated with us



during its existence, the unhesitating promptness and unanimity with which every appropriation which has been asked, or even intimated as desirable, has been granted by successive City Councils.

On one account, certainly, we might all have wished that those appropriations could have been fewer in number, and for a smaller aggregate amount. I will not deny that the satisfaction of this occasion would have been in some degree enhanced, if the architect could have succeeded, as the Commissioners had so earnestly hoped, in furnishing an honorable exception to the too common experience in the erection of public buildings, both here and elsewhere, by conforming the expenditures more nearly to the original estimates. An explanatory statement upon this point, however, has been prepared by the architect himself, which we trust and believe will prove satisfactory to all who shall examine it, and which is to find a permanent place on the records of the Commission. And if it shall appear that the main element of increased expenditure has resulted from the desire to furnish additional strength to the building, and additional securities against dampness and against fire, no one will be in haste to regret that any part of it has been incurred.

Meantime, it is a most agreeable and welcome reflection for the Commissioners themselves, in this connection, — and one, perhaps, which they might not

have been altogether pardoned for publicly indulging under any other circumstances,—that no particle of self-interest can anywhere be traced, or can anywhere be imputed, either in regard to the postponement of the period for the completion of the building, or in regard to the increase of the cost of its construction. As to the architect, certainly, it is but just to say, not only that his remuneration has been extremely moderate in itself, but that it has been in no degree contingent either on the length of time occupied, or on the amount of money expended, on the work committed to him; while, as to the Commissioners, they will be found, one and all, to have adhered rigidly to the self-denying ordinance, adopted by themselves at the outset of their proceedings, “that no pecuniary compensation, or allowance in any form, should be received by any member of the Board, for any service which he may render as such.”

But there is another reflection, Mr. Mayor, which more than reconciles me to any amount of expenditure which may have been honestly incurred in the execution of our trust. The building which we are here to dedicate is eminently and peculiarly a building for the people;—not only constructed at the cost, but designed and arranged for the use, accommodation and enjoyment, of the whole people of Boston. Almost all the other public edifices which may be found within the limits of our city, though they

may be devoted to purposes in which the many are more or less deeply and directly interested, are yet specially and necessarily assigned to the occupation and enjoyment of a few. Our convenient and comfortable City Hall is for those, who, like yourselves, gentlemen, may be intrusted, from time to time, with the management of our municipal affairs. Our massive Court House is for the still smaller number, who are set apart for the administration of civil or of criminal justice. Our excellent school houses are for the exclusive occupation of our children. But the edifice within whose walls we are assembled is emphatically for the use and the enjoyment of all the inhabitants of Boston. Even the old Cradle of Liberty itself is far less frequently and uniformly devoted to the uses of the whole people, than this new Cradle of Literature and Learning will be. A political canvass, or a patriotic celebration, or an anniversary festival, may fill that hall ten times, or it may be twenty or thirty times, in a year;—but even then, the free discussion which justly belongs to all such occasions involves an element of division and strife, of party, of sect, or of section. But this hall will always be open, and always be occupied, and the free reading which is to find a place in it, involves neither contention nor controversy. Those who entertain the most discordant opinions may here sit, shoulder to shoulder, enjoying their favorite authors as quietly

and as harmoniously as those authors themselves will repose, side by side, when restored to a common shelf.

One of the very conditions prescribed by our principal benefactor, — that large-hearted and open-handed native of Massachusetts, JOSHUA BATES, whose bust is at this moment looking down upon us with the kind and genial expression so characteristic of its honored original, — one of the primary conditions of his magnificent endowment was that this library should be “free to all, with no other restrictions than are necessary for the preservation of the books.” Here, then, Mr. Mayor, there is to be no invidious discrimination of station or condition, of occupation or profession, of age or of sex. No passport of personal pretension or popular election will be required for entering these doors. It is to be a library for the whole people, and the building which contains it is thus, above all others, the people’s building.

And which one of us, in this view, fellow-citizens, could find it in his heart to cavil at the cost, or to complain that more of economy and parsimony had not been observed in its construction? Which one of us is disposed to maintain that the people of Boston, in this day and generation, ought to have been content with a cheaper and more ordinary edifice for a purpose common to them all, and preëminently dear to all their hearts? Which one of us is ready to assume the ground, that the building is too good for

its objects, or too good for its rightful occupants and owners? I rather begin to fear that it may not be considered good enough.

When a celebrated ruler and orator of Greece was arraigned for the costliness of some one of the many magnificent structures which are associated with his administration, and whose very ruins are now the admiration of the world, he is said to have replied, that he would willingly bear all the odium and all the onus of the outlay, if the edifice in question might henceforth bear his own name, instead of being inscribed with that of the people of Athens. But the people of ancient Athens indignantly rejected the idea, and refused to relinquish, even to the illustrious and princely Pericles, the glory of such a work.

Nor will the people of Boston, I am persuaded, be less unwilling to disown or abandon the credit which is legitimately theirs, for the noble hall in which we are assembled;—and while the munificence of benefactors, abroad and at home, and the diligence and devotion of Trustees or of Commissioners, may be remembered with gratitude by us all, the City herself—“our illustrious parent,” as she was well entitled by our venerable benefactor, Mr. JONATHAN PHILLIPS—will never fail to claim the distinction as exclusively her own, that, with no niggardly or reluctant hand, but promptly, liberally, and even profusely, if you will, she supplied the entire means for its erection.

For myself, certainly, Mr. Mayor, I have no excuses or apologies to offer here to-day;—nor shall I ever be found shrinking from my just share of the responsibility for the expense which has been incurred here. Conscious of having omitted no effort in our power to secure all reasonable economy, if censure should ever fall upon the Commissioners from any quarter,—which I have not the slightest reason to apprehend,—we shall arm ourselves, I imagine, with the panoply of that philosophy, which fell almost unconsciously, at one of our meetings, from the lips of our valued associate, Alderman Bonney,—when he said, in language not unworthy of being included in the next edition of “The World’s Laconics,” —“I am not afraid of the blame I may get, but only of that which I may deserve.”

It would hardly be becoming in me, fellow-citizens, to indulge on this occasion in any phrases of compliment, or even of acknowledgment, towards those who have been connected with me in the interesting commission which is now about to terminate. It is well known to the City Council that Mr. Samuel G. Ward and Dr. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, together with myself, have been members of the Board from its original organization, on the twentieth of December, 1854. Mr. Joseph A. Pond has, also, been with us, on the part of the Common Council, since the thirteenth of April, 1855. Alderman Bonney has been a member

of the Board for two years; the Hon. Edward Everett for a year and a half; and Mr. William Parkman, of the Common Council, for nearly a year.

We are all here to-day, fellow-citizens, in your presence, to render an account of our stewardship, jointly and severally; and it is fitter, in every view, that others should pass judgment upon us and upon our acts, than that we should presume to bear witness to the fidelity of each other. I may not forget, however, that, during the progress of our work, we have enjoyed the valuable and efficient aid of others; and I should be unjust to allow the occasion to pass away, without at least mentioning the names of Mr. George Odiorne and Mr. George W. Warren, who were associated with the commission during the first three months of its existence;—of Mr. Charles Woodberry, Mr. Edward F. Porter, and Mr. Joseph Buckley, who represented the two branches of the City Council at the Board for nearly a year;—and of Mr. George Ticknor, who was one of the representatives of the Trustees of the library for a full year and a half,—during the most laborious and responsible portion of our proceedings.

But I need not detain you longer, Mr. Mayor, with any detailed recital of names, or of dates, or of doings. The ordinance of the city under which we have acted, expressly provided that “the Commissioners should meet at stated periods, and cause a

record of their proceedings to be kept; and that for this purpose the Librarian of the Public Library should act as their clerk." Those stated meetings have been held, and those records have been kept. And here, sir, in the ponderous volume before us, which is presently to be deposited in the archives of the city, are the recorded proceedings of no less than one hundred and forty-five meetings — seventy-three of them stated meetings, and seventy-two of them adjourned or special meetings; — and every motion, vote, report, — every proposal, specification, contract and payment, — will here be found fully and carefully inscribed. It would be strange, indeed, sir, if some occasional evidence of temporary disagreement, or even of important and permanent difference of opinion, should not appear on these pages; — but, taken as a whole, they will exhibit not only a punctuality of attendance and a willingness for work, but a harmony of counsel, a unanimity of decision, and a unity of action, which cannot be remembered by any of us at this hour without the highest satisfaction.

These records, let me add, Mr. Mayor and gentlemen of the City Council, are all in the fair, round, legible hand of our faithful and industrious clerk, Mr. Edward Capen, whose labors in this behalf have, as you know, been superadded to those which he has been called upon to perform in his capacity of Libra-

rian to this institution. As these services were expressly assigned to him by the City Government, the Commissioners have not felt at liberty to make him any allowance out of the funds which have been appropriated to the building. But I should be unjust to the sense which we all entertain of his untiring industry and unfailing accuracy, if I did not cordially commend him to the grateful consideration and liberal remuneration of those by whom he was employed.

Nor can I omit to bear testimony to the obliging and assiduous manner in which the architect has constantly attended to the wishes and directions of the Board, and to the unwearied zeal with which he has fulfilled the important trust which was committed to him. His work is before you, gentlemen of the City Council and fellow-citizens, and that work will speak for itself, and speak for him, far more impressively, and far more impartially, than any one of those could speak, who have been associated with him in all his cares, and who have necessarily been involved in so many of his responsibilities.

And so I may say, too, of the numerous contractors, master mechanics and laborers, who have been employed in constructing and finishing the various parts of the building. Their work must speak for them;—and if it fails to speak satisfactorily, now or hereafter, no flattering words of ours could cover up their delinquencies, or screen them from merited

reproach. But we have no fear of such a result. It will not have been forgotten by those who have been employed here, from time to time, that they have been working, in more than one sense, for themselves, as well as for the Commissioners and the city;—that not the humblest laborer among them is to be excluded from his equal share of the repast which is here to be enjoyed;—and that their own children, and their children's children, will be quite as likely to be found hereafter among the most frequent and intelligent partakers of that repast, as those of any of their more immediate employers. Considerations like these are enough to have insured a zealous coöperation on the part of all, certainly, to whom they may have occurred; and we trust and believe, that this building will bear witness, in all time to come, to the proverbial intelligence, fidelity and skill of Boston mechanics.

It would have been most welcome to us, Mr. Mayor, to be able to say, that so extensive and protracted a work had been brought to a close, without the occurrence of a single casualty to cast a shade over the joyousness of this occasion. Within a few weeks past, however, a worthy painter, Mr. Thomas Rowin, fell from a scaffold on one of the towers in the rear, at a height too great to allow the slightest hope of his surviving the fall. It was decided by those to whom we appealed for advice, that no provision could

be legally made for the relief of his family, either by this Board or by the City Council. But prompt and generous contributions from his sympathizing fellow-workmen, from members of the City Government in their individual capacity, from members of this Board, and from other friends of the library, have already done something—and it is hoped that still more may be done, if more be needed—to relieve the sorrows and wants of a widow and children, who were so strongly commended, by the circumstances of their bereavement, to the sympathies of the people of Boston.

Mr. Mayor and fellow-citizens: my relations to this occasion, as I have already intimated, are simply those of a Building Commissioner,—one of the humble *Ædiles* whom you have intrusted with the erection of an edifice, of which others are henceforth to have the responsible care and custody. My legitimate theme has been of designs and contracts, of iron and stone, of brick and mortar,—of those who have wielded the plane or the trowel, of those who have carried the hod, or rigged the derrick, or reared these stately columns, or moulded these beautiful capitals and cornices, or given the last hand to ceiling and wall by these harmonious and exquisite tints. It is not for me, to-day, to take up more time, by enlarging on the advantages which are to result from the institution which is here to find its permanent local hab-

itation. Still less may I attempt to deal with those who have contributed the literary treasures, which are soon to be unfolded and displayed here. Other voices, now or hereafter, will do justice to the original projectors and founders of the institution. Other voices, now or hereafter, will be heard in grateful commemoration of the munificent donations of JOSHUA BATES and JONATHAN PHILLIPS among the honored living, and of ABBOTT LAWRENCE among the lamented dead, whose names are preëminent on the long roll of our benefactors. Nor will those voices be wanting in acknowledgment to the many hundreds of others who have entitled themselves by ever so small a contribution to a place upon that roll.

I may be permitted to say, however, before taking leave of this topic, that in view of the contemplated dedication of this building in September last, I was directed by the Commissioners to address a letter to our distant and distinguished benefactor, Mr. BATES, inviting his personal presence on the occasion. And I am sure I shall be excused by him and by yourselves, for reading to you, in this connection, a brief extract from his reply. It was dated, London, August 27, 1857, and, after thanking me for my letter, it continues as follows:—

I am happy to learn that the Library is approaching completion, and that it is contemplated to open it next month. You express a wish that I should be present. I can assure

you that nothing would give me more pleasure than to visit Boston, where I began my career, and to whose citizens, by their confidence and support in time of need, I am indebted for whatever of fortune or reputation I possess. Although my contemporaries, with few exceptions, are laid in their graves, the memory of the past is an unfailing source of happiness to me, and makes me regret the more that I cannot be with you on the opening of the new Library. I shall hope to make you a visit a year or two hence, when, if I mistake not, the importance of the Library to the rising generation will be more fully appreciated;—when it will be admitted that the City, the Trustees, and the contributors have accomplished a great work, that will command the gratitude of the people through all time.

Believe me, very truly, yours,

JOSHUA BATES.

Admirable utterance of a generous and noble spirit! We wafted the assurances of our grateful remembrance of his liberality over a summer sea, while we were gathered, a little more than two years ago, upon the firm foundations and around the substantial corner-stone beneath us. And now not even the raging of a wintry ocean shall intercept the transmission of our renewed and redoubled gratitude for his munificence, when the head-stone has been brought forth with shoutings. There is no winter in his bounty, and there shall be none in our acknowledgment. May the year which is just opening be to him a year of unalloyed happiness, prosperity, and health; and may it not come quite to a close,

without affording to the people of Boston the high gratification of welcoming him within the walls of an edifice, to which he will have contributed so large a proportion of its richest and most cherished treasures.

It only remains for me, as President of the Board of Commissioners, and in their name, to deliver to you, Mr. Mayor, these keys of the principal doors of the building which we have erected, at once as a symbol that our work is finished, and as an earnest of the delivery of the building itself to the city, over which you preside. We do not presume to present it to you as a faultless piece of architecture. We are not vain enough to imagine that critical eyes may not discover, both in the design and in the execution, features which might have been improved. But we do present it as a convenient, substantial, spacious structure — entirely adapted to its purposes, and carefully arranged for the most economical administration of the institution for which it is intended — capacious enough for two or three hundred thousand volumes, and for as many readers as are ever likely to visit it at one and the same time — with no deficiency of light or air — secure, we have full confidence, from the dangers of fire — and which, while it is devoid of any ostentatious ornament without, and while it exhibits no excessive or fanciful embellishment within, is yet in no respect unworthy,


either within or without, of the liberal and enlightened community in whose service it has been erected.

We present it to you, indeed, Mr. Mayor, a mere mass of naked walls and columns and arches. But these vacant alcoves will soon be occupied. These empty shelves will soon be filled. Gems and jewels more precious than any which the mines of either continent can ever yield, will soon find their places in the caskets and cabinets which have here been prepared for them; and living jewels, like those of the Roman matron of old—even the sons and daughters of our city—will soon be seen clustered around them.

It was a poetical and beautiful conceit of the great philosopher of our motherland,—of Bacon, I mean, the contemporary and fellow-countryman of our Pilgrim Fathers—that “libraries are as the shrines where all the relics of the ancient saints, full of true virtue, and that without delusion or imposture, are preserved and reposed.” But Cicero, methinks, did better justice to the theme. We are told that when that illustrious orator and statesman saw the books which composed his precious private library, fairly arranged in the apartment which he had provided for them, in his villa at Antium, he wrote to his friend Atticus, “*Postea vero quam Tyrannio mihi libros disposuit, mens addita videtur meis ædibus.*” “Now that my books have been put

in their places by your learned Greek, Tyrannio, a soul seems to have been added to my dwelling."

And our own American Cicero is at this moment at your side, sir,—prepared to receive these keys from your hand, in behalf of the Trustees over whom he so fitly presides; and under his auspices, and with the aid of his associates, it is hardly too much to say that a living, breathing, imperishable soul will have been infused into this now merely material structure. Yes, my friends, within these walls shall soon be gathered, not merely the mighty masters of philosophy and rhetoric, of history and poetry, whom the Roman Cicero recognized and revered as introducing a soul into his dwelling, but the great lights of all ages, the wise and learned of all climes—and those, especially, who have adorned a civilization, and vindicated a liberty, and illustrated a Christianity which that Cicero never conceived of, shall be congregated around them. Here soon shall many a waiting heart be kindled into something of the exultation of that good old Bishop of Norwich, when he exclaimed, on the sight of a great library, "What a happiness is it, that without all offence of necromancy, I may here call up any of the ancient worthies of learning, whether human or divine, and confer with them of all my doubts!—that I can at pleasure summon up whole synods of reverend fathers and acute doctors, from all the coasts of the earth,



to give their well-studied judgments on all points and questions which I may propose!"

And not the reverend fathers and acute doctors only shall answer to our call;—but here also the poets of all ages shall be ever ready to sing to us their choicest strains;—the dramatists of all ages to rehearse to us their richest scenes of wit or of woe;—the orators of all ages to recite to us the triumphant argument, or the thrilling appeal, which may have shaken empires from their base, or changed the current of the world's affairs. Here, too, the practical inventor and ingenious mechanic shall exhibit to us his specifications, his plans, and his drawings. Here the great interpreters of Nature shall unfold to us the mechanism of the heavens, the testimony of the rocks, and the marvels and mysteries of animal and vegetable life. Here the glowing pictures of fiction and fancy shall pass and repass before our vision, beneath the magic wand of a Scott, a Dickens, or a Cooper;—the living portraits of sages and patriots, of other lands and of our own land, be displayed to us by a Guizot or a Brougham, a Carlyle or a Campbell, a Sparks or an Irving;—and the grander panorama of history be unrolled for us by a Gibbon or a Grote, a Hume or a Macaulay, a Bancroft, a Prescott, or a Motley.

But I can do no justice to a theme like this in the closing sentences of a discourse, which has already

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occupied you too long,—and I leave it, all unfinished, for those who are to follow me.

Let me conclude, Mr. Mayor and gentlemen of the City Council, by thanking you once more, in the name of my associates and in my own name, for the confidence with which you have honored us in the execution of our commission, and let me offer you our best wishes and prayers that this institution may fulfil the most sanguine expectations of its founders and friends. May God, in his goodness, grant that increased supplies of wisdom and knowledge and virtue, for us and our posterity, may be its rich and abundant fruits;—that it may be so sanctified by His grace to the highest interests of the whole community, that here, at least, the tree of knowledge may never be disunited from the tree of life;—and that, constituting, as it will, the complement and the crown of our great republican system of popular education, it may do its full part in bearing up and sustaining, for a thousand generations, a well-compacted and imperishable fabric of freedom;—of that freedom which rests upon intelligence, which must be regulated by law, and which can only be maintained by piety, philanthropy and patriotism.

At the close of Mr. Winthrop's address, His Honor ALEXANDER H. RICE, Mayor of the city, rose, and on receiving the keys of the building spoke as follows:—

MAYOR RICE'S ADDRESS.

A LITTLE more than three years ago, Mr. President, there was committed to your charge and to that of your respected associates in the Board of Commissioners for the erection of a Public Library Building, an undertaking, which, whether it be regarded in respect to the importance of a correct and appropriate architectural design and thorough mechanical execution, or in its connection with an institution which cannot fail to bestow the most beneficent and lasting results upon the community in which we live, has scarcely been surpassed by any enterprise in which this city has engaged. It has long been peculiar to Boston that nearly all her institutions of education, literature, science, art and charity, as well as of religion, are permanently established in structures appropriated to their especial use; and if the number and variety of these institutions evince the power of paramount ideas over the minds of our population, so likewise the number and value of these structures may illustrate the general subordination of wealth

to the higher behests of the intellect and the heart. To the many imposing structures already thus appropriated, and which have chiefly been erected by private bounty or by associated enterprise, this noble edifice — the special object of your care and supervision — has at length been added, at the public expense.

The work committed to your hands was the erection of a commodious and substantial building, with appropriate apartments for the library and reading rooms, and other accommodations for those who might desire to avail themselves of its privileges ; — a building, which, neither destitute of beauty nor overwrought with ornament, should yet be a suitable and generous fulfilment of the only condition which was appended to the munificence of its early, and constant, and preëminent benefactor. The enterprise was given in charge to your commission, Mr. President, with no other guaranty for its faithful execution than that which the government found in names honorably identified with our local history, or proved by varied and valuable service in public and social life. The confidence which crowned the inception of the work has continued with singular completeness and unwavering constancy to this hour ; when, as we pass through these stately halls, and witness their comprehensive and ample design, the strength and solidity of their foundations and walls, the fitness and adapta-

tion of each apartment to its use, and the simplicity and beauty of all their proportions and adornments, the whole becomes a testimonial that the public confidence has not been misplaced. For this distinguished and gratuitous service, Gentlemen of the Commission, since your generosity disdains any other reward, I tender to you the cordial thanks of the City Government, in the full assurance that their gratitude finds an applauding response in the hearts of the thousands whom they represent, and that this service, so ably and so faithfully performed in their behalf, will be held by posterity in honorable and grateful remembrance.

And now, Gentlemen of the City Council, that this important work is consummated and placed in our charge, to be consigned to still other and well-proved custodians, for the high purpose to which it is to be dedicated, it is appropriate that we dwell for a single moment upon a few thoughts which the occasion suggests. The occurrence of an important event in the course of individual experience often leaves indelible impressions upon character, and materially influences the subsequent history of a life. And, however large the scope of his contemplations, every intelligent observer will perceive that the tendencies and conditions of communities and of society in general are in like manner affected or controlled; and also that the forces by which human progress is

developed, often break forth into institutions which become monuments, not only measuring and commemorating its 'advancement, but also inciting their observers to fresh endeavors.

The history of the foundation of society here is familiar. The prophetic appreciation of the fruits of popular and universal education, and of their value in the minds of the early settlers of New England, is continually brought before us for grateful admiration; and if we may with any truthfulness, or in any degree, claim distinction in social privileges among the noble communities which make up the whole of a country upon whose unity we delight to dwell, we must acknowledge that this happiness is attributable, in no small degree, to a fair improvement of advantages which have come to us by inheritance. And while we stand here to-day, and survey with pride and satisfaction these towering columns and this majestic hall, and contemplate the use to which it is destined, we fall far short of the real significance of the structure if we regard not its origin as well as its destiny. As surely as the flower springs from the seed in obedience to the silent and mysterious laws of germination,—as certainly as the fruit follows the blossom which in the dainty tastefulness of nature pledges the unborn harvest,—so inevitably will the elements of thought and feeling become developed,

in every age, into institutions commensurate with the progress of ideas.

This institution is but the perfected fruit from that vigorous root which was planted in sixteen hundred and thirty-five, by the master of the original free school in Boston, and which first rose as a single stalk, then spread abroad its healthful branches and dropped its scions into the earth, like the famous banyan tree of India, till it has multiplied itself in every quarter of our municipal domain, and gathers beneath its refreshing shades to-day nearly thirty thousand of our youthful population. This institution, therefore, is not an accident; strictly speaking, it is not a design, but a beautiful and inevitable result of the active influences which preceded it—a result fraught with the elements of reproductive power—never itself to be superseded, but to be amplified and extended into other forms and newer forces.

Is it possible there may be some who question the usefulness of such an institution as this, and the expediency of this expenditure? I am sure that the number must be small, if, indeed, there be any. To question the worth of a library is to summon to trial the value of knowledge itself; it is to dismiss as useless the literature of the past, and to throw recklessly away the flowers of genius which bloom around us in the present. For a book that is not worthy of preservation is unworthy of the press; and without

the press the domain of knowledge would soon be limited to memory and tradition. How startling the thought of a world without the great lights which shine down upon it from the literature and the examples of the past: a world without a Bible, a Homer, a Shakespeare, a Bacon, a Newton, a Franklin, a La Place, a Cicero, a Chatham, a Webster: a world without imperial Cæsar, or a more than imperial Washington: in short, a world where Science, Religion, Philosophy, Statesmanship and Patriotism — a mourning sisterhood—prolong, in darkened silence, their tireless vigils at the courts of death! Nor only this—the present is every moment becoming the past—is there nothing in the mind of the present which is worthy of preservation? Who that has hung in rapt enchantment on the silver tongue whose charming melody enriched the fame of him beyond the reach of common eulogy—that tongue whose clarion notes summoned the crowding throngs with treasure to redeem the patriot's grave—that voice still ringing in our ears from yonder hall, where it all but divinely spoke for charity!—who would deprive the beggared future of that voice? Who would not stereotype those words in adamant? I have somewhere read that literature is the immortality of speech; that it embalms for all ages the departed kings of learning, and watches over their repose in the eternal pyramids of Fame. Who

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would deprive that tongue of its high destined sepulchre?

If it were needful to prove the value to the public of such a treasury of knowledge as shall here be gathered, arguments might be drawn from numerous sources; and, as they crowd upon my mind at the moment, such an institution ceases to be a matter of expediency, and becomes the imperative demand of the times and of our community. But, fellow-citizens, it is not necessary here to argue such a theme; and if it were, mine is not the voice, nor is this the presence, in which it should be done; for the duties of this day alone have thrust me before you for a moment—a lowly mound, between these Alps and Andes of eloquence.

Ladies and gentlemen: our city has sometimes been called the Athens of America; sometimes in compliment; let it never be in derision. The real claim to that shining title must rest upon the culture which is bestowed upon the institutions and the arts, which suggest a resemblance to the charming "Eye of Greece." In the rising greatness of that peerless city, we are told that the enlightened and patriotic arbiter of its fortunes, the patron of literature and learning, not only reclaimed the works of Homer from threatened oblivion, but established a public library at Athens, open to the free use of its citizens, and by these acts established there the

home of the Muses. The golden age of Cimon and Pericles followed—the age of the Gymnasium, of the Academy, of the Agora, of the temple of Eleusis, of the Parthenon and of the Propylæa, and of all the culture which produced and surrounded them—that age of dazzling splendor which has not yet ceased to excite the wonder and admiration of mankind. I may not pause to compare the civilization of that age with ours, in all that is useful and beneficent to man; but if, in our contemplations of the glory of that era, there come to us impressions of exhaustless wealth, vast extent, and resources unapproachable to us of the present, let it be remembered that the wonderful Athens of history contained a population less than that of Boston to-day, and that the number of those who might exercise the rights of citizenship therein was less than our number of voters. How far the free library of Pisistratus affected the character and fortunes of the Grecian city, neither history nor tradition discloses; but we know that it preceded its power and splendor, and that these all came from the brain and the hand of man. Whether the noble institution whose flattering auspices we here hail to-day, shall be the harbinger of a more illustrious future to our Athens, may depend, in some degree, upon the patronage which shall await upon these halls; for the power of knowledge is essentially the same in every period of time, though the


fruits of its cultivation may be changed by the altered conditions of the race and the age.

But time forbids that I should pursue the theme; a single word more and I have done. While here gathered in joyous assemblage to-day, there are those—some of whom are before me, others are absent and distant—all of whom should have a place in our memories. It was the custom at certain Athenian festivals for the knights to make the circuit of the Agora, beginning at the statue of Hermes and paying their homage to the statues and temples around it. On this new year's festival, now first celebrated within these walls, since we have not yet their statues about us, let us summon to our thoughts, in living personality, the images of all the noble benefactors of our Public Library, the contributors of funds, of books, and of valued service; and let us pay to each the homage of our hearts' best gratitude, as they pass through the courts of our memories. Length of days and happiness to the living—fresh laurels for the memory of the departed—praises to Heaven for their gifts and their example.

The address of Mr. Winthrop on presenting the keys of the library building to the city government was commenced exactly at sixteen minutes past four o'clock, and concluded at ten minutes past five, occupying in the delivery about fifty-four minutes. The time taken by His Honor the Mayor, in his reply, was about twenty-one minutes. While both gentlemen were speaking, a profound silence prevailed; but as each of the orators arose, and when they took their seats, marks of approbation and applause were liberally bestowed by the assembled audience.

After the mayor had ceased speaking, a short pause ensued previous to the ceremonies of dedication, which had been arranged by the Committee. These consisted of the proper religious services and singing; the latter of which was most admirably performed by the choir of young ladies selected for the purpose, and who occupied the lower gallery at the southern extremity of the hall, where a suitable staging had been erected for their special accommodation.

Quietness being again restored, the ceremonies of dedication were commenced. The choir above mentioned, composed of one hundred and twenty-five young ladies, members of the Girls' High and Normal school, sang the following hymn, under the direction of Mr. CHARLES BUTLER, to the air of the



"Italian Hymn," with an accompaniment on a grand piano-forte, gratuitously furnished for the occasion by the Messrs. Chickering.

H Y M N.

Come, thou Almighty King!
Help us thy name to sing,
Help us to praise!
Father all glorious,
O'er all victorious,
Come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days!

Come, thou eternal Lord!
By heaven and earth adored,
Our prayer attend!
Come and thy children bless;
Give thy good word success;
Make thine own holiness
On us descend!

Be thou our comforter;
Thy sacred witness bear
In this glad hour.
Omnipotent thou art:
O, rule in every heart,
And ne'er from us depart,
Spirit of power.

The hymn was, after a due pause, succeeded by the following Prayer of Dedication, offered by the Rev. BARON STOW, D.D., pastor of the society worshipping in the Rowe street Baptist Church.

P R A Y E R.

O God, our Father; our Helper in the past, our Hope for the future; we would in all our ways acknowledge thee, that thou mayst direct our paths. In all things we recognize and adore thy supremacy; and, ever as we begin, and as we finish, we would honor the prerogatives of the Infinite Sovereign upon whom we are always dependent, and to whom we must render our final account. When the foundations of this edifice were laid, we sought thy blessing; and, as thou hast richly answered our request, we now come before thee with a tribute of thanksgiving and praise, for the favor with which thou hast crowned the enterprise. By the good hand of our God upon us, the structure has been completed; and, by these public services, we do solemnly and joyously consecrate it to purposes in harmony with the great ends of thy beneficent administration.

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed, we recognize thy providence in the commencement, in the progress, and in the consummation of this undertaking, and, with reverent homage, we present before thee our finished work, invoking upon it thy benediction, and imploring thine aid, that as we and those who shall come after us may enjoy its benefits, it may be so

employed as to subserve thy glory and the good of humanity.

Father of mercies, and God of all grace, we, as a people, are indebted to thee for special blessings. We thank thee for our ancestry. We are descended from those who feared thee, and kept thy precepts. Purified as gold in the fires of affliction, they reflected thine image. Thou didst chasten them, and teach them out of thy law. In knowledge of thy revealed truth, in submission to thine authority, in spiritual culture, in practical virtue, they were in advance of their race, and the pioneers of a higher civilization than the world had seen. Under thy guidance, and by the strength of an enduring faith, they wrought effectively for the benefit of posterity; and, of their legacy of soul-freedom, and sound principles, and Christian institutions, we are the happy inheritors. We thank thee for the light of their example, for the conservatism of their influence, for all the good developed from their prayers, and toils, and sacrifices. Living where they lived, and where their ashes repose, the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage. We are here to-day because they were here before us. Instructed by thy Word, and illuminated by thy Spirit, they appreciated mind, and gave it their care in preference to all material interests; and, through them, thou hast taught us to make the culture of imperishable mind our chief con-

cern, and to avail ourselves of matter and its laws, of science and literature and art, as auxiliary to the higher, spiritual end.

We thank thee, Father, for all the blessings with which we as a community are favored. We acknowledge thy kind providence towards our nation as a family of States, united by the bonds of many and great interests; towards our commonwealth, whose history is rich in the tokens of thy munificence; and especially towards the city of our habitation, over which thou hast extended thy constant guardianship, and in whose well-being, in every department, we see proofs of thy paternal goodness. We thank thee for our system of government, for the churches of our holy religion, for our free schools, for our free press, for our benevolent institutions, for all the means of moral, intellectual, and social improvement. We thank thee for the many citizens whom thou hast raised up in the successive generations, endowing them with wealth and intelligence and humane affections, and prompting them to consecrate their resources to objects of public utility.

Especially now do we thank thee for the generous-hearted who have originated and liberally endowed the institution which is here to have its home, and which, we devoutly trust, under thy protection and by thy smile, shall be to our city a permanent blessing. Do thou, Father of Lights, superintend its inter-

ests, and cause that it shall be a depository of only the true and the wise and the good. Let it be a fountain whose issues shall be all healthful, enlightening intellect, refining taste, purifying morals, and contributing to the formation of model character. Give wisdom to all who may be intrusted with its management, that they may ever have regard to their accountability to thee, and in all things fulfil their mission as good and faithful servants. May all who shall resort hither for the means of instruction or entertainment, be ever mindful that life is short, and that its trusts are momentous; and may it be their uniform endeavor so to cultivate their higher natures as shall best qualify themselves for the duties of the passing present, and the rewards of the unending future.

Have this institution, we entreat thee, in thine own paternal keeping, and make it for centuries to come richly tributary to the advancement of truth and purity, justice and mercy, righteousness and salvation.

Have us, we beseech thee, and all our interests, personal and relative, under thy guardian care. Forgive our sins, replenish us with thy grace, make us useful, and finally accept us through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

And now, unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according

to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory
in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages,
world without end. Amen.

The following anthem was then sung by the choir,
the music from "Il Pirata" by Bellini:—

AN T H E M.

CHORUS.

Mighty Jehovah, accept our praises;
God, our Father, O, hear thy children;
Unto thee we offer praise.
For thy goodness to thy children
And thy undeserved mercies
We will offer thee our thanks;
To thee we offer grateful thanks.

OBLIGATO AND CHORUS.

O, sing praises to His holy name,
And rejoice in His mercy.
Sing to Him with the lute and harp,
Call upon His name, and rejoice in Him
With thanksgiving and with gladness.
O, sing praises with joy and gladness;
O, be joyful in the Lord;
Sing praises to Him, ye nations,
Sing, rejoice, and praise His name.

His Honor MAYOR RICE then, in the name of the
city, delivered the keys to the Board of Trustees of
the Public Library, handing them to Hon. Mr. Everett,
the President of the Board:—

MAYOR RICE'S SPEECH.

It only remains for me, Mr. President of the Board of Trustees, that I shall perform the agreeable duty, by chance reserved to illuminate the closing hours of my municipal labors, of delivering the keys of this building to you, in token of its surrender to those — the chosen guardians of its future fortunes — who have already given to the library the sanction of their names, and an invaluable service.

In vain were all that has been done by others, but for the more silent, unostentatious, and perhaps wearisome labor, which you and your associates have performed — a labor transcending the requirements of your office, and engaging the noblest powers and the warmest zeal for its success. The abounding liberality which flows to the library under the auspices of a name likely to be memorable in both hemispheres, and which deserves to be immortal certainly in one, still imposes upon the Trustees a labor requiring both leisure and culture in its performance.

If heretofore this labor has seemed to be unrecognized or unappreciated, let this elegant and costly

structure,—the casket only of the gem with whose selection and custody you are intrusted,—and the enthusiasm which attends its completion and surrender, be now received as tokens of the public interest in your labors and pledges of its confidence. So long as the love of knowledge shall prevail, so long as an enlightened patriotism shall survive, so long as aspirations for the highest welfare of man shall be breathed, so long will this institution find its usefulness in our community, and reflect upon each coming age something of the characteristics which you bestow upon itself. This building is committed to your charge as the property of the people ; its privileges are to be as free as air, as universal as our population. The rich and the poor are to be alike welcome at its doors, the high and the lowly born, the masses who wield the hammers of toil, and the unenvied few who are reared in affluence and ease. Genius knows no rank, but chooses her votaries from all. Here shall she henceforth spread her perpetual banquet, and to one of her peerless sons I hasten to surrender her beautiful habitation.

Hon. EDWARD EVERETT, President of the Board of Trustees, on receiving the keys delivered the following address:—

MR. EVERETT'S ADDRESS.

MR. MAYOR:—In behalf of the Trustees of the City Library, I receive with extreme pleasure the keys which you have placed in my hands. The completion of the noble building, which the City Government now confides to our care, is an event to which the Trustees have been looking forward with the greatest interest, and which they now contemplate with the highest satisfaction. They deem themselves especially honored in their connection with an institution, for whose use this stately and commodious edifice has been erected, and which, they doubt not, is destined to be instrumental of the highest good to the community, and to reflect lasting credit upon the liberality, public and private, with which it has been founded and endowed.

The City of Boston, owing to peculiar circumstances in its growth and history, has been at all times, as I think, beyond most cities in the world, the object of an affectionate attachment on the part of its inhabitants—a feeling entitled to respect, and

productive of good, even if it may sometimes seem to strangers over-partial in its manifestations. It is not merely its commanding natural situation, the triple hills on which it is enthroned, its magnificent bay and harbor, and the group of islands and islets that sparkle like emeralds on their surface — not merely this most admirable Common, which opens before our windows, delightful even at this season of the year, and affording us in summer, in its noble malls and shady walks, all that the country can boast of cool and beautiful and salubrious, transported to the heart of the city; “the poor man’s pleasure ground,” as it has been well called, though a king might envy it;—nor the environs of our city, of surpassing loveliness, which enclose it on every side in kindly embrace; it is not solely nor principally these natural attractions which endear Boston to its citizens. Nor is it exclusively the proud and grateful memories of the past—of the high-souled fathers and mothers of the land, venerable in their self-denying virtues, majestic in the austere simplicity of their manners, conscientious in their errors, who, with amazing sacrifices, and hardships never to be described, sought out new homes in the wilderness, and transmitted to us delights and blessings which it was not given to themselves to enjoy—of those who in succeeding generations deserved well of their country—the pioneers of the revolution, the men of the stamp-act age, whose own words and acts

are stamped on the pages of history, in characters never to be effaced,—of those who, when the decisive hour came, stood forth in that immortal hall, the champions of their country's rights, while it scarcely yet deserved the name of a country; it is not exclusively these proud and grateful associations, which attach the dutiful Bostonian to the city of his birth or adoption.

No, Mr. Mayor, it is not exclusively these, much as they contribute to strengthen the sentiment. It has its origin, in no small degree, in the personal relation in which Boston places herself to her children; in the parental interest which she cherishes in their welfare, which leads her to take them by the hand almost from the cradle,—to train them up in the ascending series of her excellent free schools; watching over them as a fond father watches over the objects of his love and hope; in a word, to confer upon them a first-rate school education at the public expense. Often have I attempted, but with very partial success, both in this country and in Europe, to persuade inquiring friends from countries and places where no such well-organized system of public education prevails, that our free schools do really afford to the entire population means of elementary education of which the wealthiest citizen is glad to avail himself.

And now, Mr. Mayor, the enlightened counsels of the City Government are about to give new strength

to those ties of gratitude and affection, which bind the hearts of the children of Boston to their beloved city. Hitherto the system of public education, excellent as it is, and wisely supported by a princely expenditure, does but commence the work of instruction and carry it to a certain point; well advanced, indeed, but far short of the goal. It prepares our young men for college, for the counting-room, for the office of the engineer, the *studio* of the artist, the shop of the artisan, the laboratory of the chemist, or whatever field of employment they may be destined to enter; but there it leaves them, without further provision for the culture of the mind. It disciplines the faculties, and forms a taste for the acquisition of knowledge, on the part of our young men and women; but it provides no means for their exercise and gratification. It gives them the elementary education requisite for their future callings, but withholds all facilities of access to those boundless stores of recorded knowledge, in every department, by which alone that elementary education can be completed and made effectual for the active duties of life.

But to-day our honored city carries on and perfects her work. The Trustees, from their first annual report to the present time, have never failed to recommend a first class public library, such as that, sir, for whose accommodation you destine this noble building, as the completion of the great system of public edu-

cation. Its object is to give to the entire population, not merely to the curious student, but to the inquisitive member of either of the professions, to the intelligent merchant, mechanic, machinist, engineer, artist, or artisan, in short, to all of every age and of either sex, who desire to investigate any subject, either of utility or taste, those advantages which, without such an ample public collection, must necessarily be monopolized by the proprietors of large private libraries, or those who by courtesy have the use of them; nay, to put within the reach of the entire community advantages of this kind, far beyond those which can be afforded by the largest and best provided private libraries.

The Trustees are anxious that the institution, whose prosperity they have so much at heart, should continue to be viewed in this light; as one more added to the school-houses of the city, at which Boston boys and girls, when they have outgrown the other schools, will come to carry on the education which has been there commenced; where Boston men and women, "children of a larger growth," may come to acquire that additional knowledge which is requisite for the most successful discharge of the duties of the various callings of society,—which opens, in its pursuit, the purest sources of happiness, and which, without reference to utility, contributes so materially to the grace and ornament of life.

I am aware that there is still floating about in the community a vague prejudice against what is called book-learning. One sometimes hears doubts expressed of the utility of public libraries; opinions that they are rather ornamental than necessary or useful; and the fact that our time-honored city, never indifferent to the mental improvement of her children, has subsisted more than two centuries without one, is a sufficient proof that until within a very few years, their importance has not been practically felt. There is, perhaps, even now a disposition to claim some superiority for what is called practical knowledge—knowledge gained by observation and experience, (which most certainly the Trustees would not disparage,) and a kind of satisfaction felt in holding up the example of self-taught men, in supposed contradistinction from those who have got their knowledge from books; and no name, perhaps, is so frequently mentioned in this connection as that of Franklin, who, because he had scarce any school education, and never went to college, has been hastily set down as a brilliant example to show the inutility of book-learning. It has been quoted to me in this way, and to show that libraries are of no use, within three days.

Now, Mr. Mayor, I need not tell you that there never was a greater mistake in point of fact. A thirst for books, which he spared no pains to allay,

is the first marked trait disclosed in the character of Franklin; his success throughout the early period of his life can be directly traced to the use he made of them; and his very first important movement for the benefit of his fellow-men, was to found a public library, which still flourishes;—one of the most considerable in the country. Franklin not a book-man! whoever labors under that delusion, shows that somebody else is not much of a book-man, at least so far as concerns the biography of our illustrious townsman. We happen to have a little information on that subject in a book written by Franklin himself. He there gives a very different account of himself, and I would ask any one who entertains the idea to which I am alluding, at what period of Franklin's career he supposes this *tasfê* for books began to be manifested by him; how soon he ceased to be a self-formed man? Perhaps after he had struggled through the years of his youthful poverty,—escaped to Philadelphia,—set up in business as a printer, and began to have a little money in his pocket. I need not tell you, sir, that it was earlier than that. Was it, then, while he was the clever apprentice to his brother, the editor of a journal, and wrote articles for its columns in a disguised hand, and tucked them under the office door, enjoying the exquisite delight of being ordered to set up his own anonymous articles? Was it, then, at the age of fifteen or sixteen, that this fondness for

reading, under the stimulus of boyish authorship, disclosed itself? Earlier than that. Well, then, at the grammar school and Master Brownwell's writing school, which he attended from eight to ten, (for there are boys who show a fondness for reading even at that tender age;) was little Benjamin's taste for books developed while yet at school? Earlier than that. Hear his own words, which you will permit me to read from that exquisite piece of autobiography to which I have already alluded: "From my *infancy* I was passionately fond of reading, and all the money that came into my hands was laid out in purchasing books. I was very fond of voyages. My first acquisition was Bunyan's works, in separate little volumes. I afterwards sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's Historical Collections. They were small chapman's books and cheap, forty volumes in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read. I have often regretted, [and this is a sentence that might be inscribed on the lofty cornice of this noble hall,] that at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way. . . . There was among them Plutarch's Lives, which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of Defoe's, called an 'Essay on Projects,' and another of Dr. Mather's, called an 'Essay to Do Good,' which" did what, sir?

—for I am now going to give you in Franklin's own words (they carry with them the justification of every dollar expended in raising these walls) the original secret of his illustrious career—what was the effect produced by reading these two little books of Defoe and Cotton Mather? "They perhaps gave me a turn of thinking, which had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life."

Yes, sir, in the reading of those books was the acorn, that sprouted into that magnificent oak; there was the fountain-drop which a fairy might sip from a buttercup, from which has flowed the Missouri and the Mississippi,—the broad, deep river of Franklin's fame, winding its way through the lapse of ages, and destined to flow on, till it shall be ingulfed in the ocean of eternity. From his "infancy," sir, "passionately fond of reading," nay, with the appetite of a vulture, with the digestion of an ostrich, attacking the great folios of polemic divinity in his father's library. Not a dull boy, either, sir; not a precocious little book-worm; fond of play; doesn't dislike a little mischief; sometimes, as he tells us, "led the other boys into scrapes;" but in his intervals of play, in his leisure moments, up in the lonely garret, when the rest of the family were asleep, holding converse in his childhood with the grave old non-conformists, Howe, and Owen, and Baxter,—communing with the

austerest lords of thought; the demigods of puritanism,—

Non sine diis animosus infans.

Franklin not a book-man? Why, he goes on to tell us that it was “this bookish inclination which at length determined his father to make him a printer,” against his own inclination, which was for the sea; and when he had thus by constraint become a printer, his great consolation was, as he says, that “I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my chamber reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening and to be returned in the morning, lest it should be found missing.”

Then he made the acquaintance of Mr. Matthew Adams, an ingenious, sensible man, “who had a pretty collection of books.” He frequented the printing office, took notice of the bright little apprentice, and “very kindly proposed to lend me such books as I chose to read.” Having taken to a vegetable diet at the age of sixteen, he persuaded his brother to allow him in cash half the price of his board, lived upon potatoes and hasty pudding, soon found that he could save half even of that little allowance, (which could not have exceeded two-and-sixpence a week, lawful money,) and this poor little economy “was an

additional fund for buying books." What would the poor, underfed boy, who was glad to buy books on the savings of his potato diet, have said could he have had free access to a hall like this, stored as it soon will be with its priceless treasures? Further, sir, while working as a journeyman in England, he says, "I made the acquaintance of one William Wilcox, a bookseller, whose shop was next door. He had an immense collection of second-hand books;" — (somewhat, I suppose, like our friend Burnham, in Cornhill;) — "circulating libraries were not then in use, but we agreed that on certain reasonable terms, which I have now forgotten, I might take, read and return any of his works. This I esteemed a great advantage, and I made as much use of it as I could."

Finally, sir, as I have already said, Franklin's first important movement for the good of his fellow-men was the foundation of the public library in Philadelphia. At his instance, the members of a little club to which he belonged, tradesmen and mechanics of narrow means, threw into common stock the few books which belonged to them. A subscription was then obtained from fifty young men, principally tradesmen, of two pounds each, and ten shillings per annum, and with this little fund they began. "The books were imported, the library was opened one day in the week for lending them to the subscribers, on their promissory notes to pay double the value if not

duly returned." "This was the mother," says Franklin, "of all the North American subscription libraries, now so numerous. It has become a great thing itself, and continually goes on increasing. These libraries have improved the general conversation of the Americans, made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries, and, perhaps, have contributed in some degree to the stand so generally made throughout the colonies in defence of their privileges."

Those are the words of Franklin, Mr. Mayor, which I read from his own book. Our excellent friend, the President of the Commissioners, has justly felicitated himself on having been the first person publicly to raise his voice in this noble hall. He must be a happier man than I who can speak an earlier or an abler word than his on any occasion; but I claim the credit of having read from the first book opened in this hall; and what is more, sir, I mean to have the satisfaction of presenting the first volume given to the library since it came into the care of the Trustees. In your presence, Mr. Mayor, and that of this vast assembly, on this first of January, 1858, I offer this copy of Franklin's Autobiography, in Sparks's edition, as a new year's gift to the Boston Public Library. Nay, sir, I am going to do more, and make the first, and perhaps the last, motion ever made in this hall; and that is, that every person present, of

his own accord if of age,—with the consent of parent or guardian if a minor,—man, woman, boy, or girl, be requested, on going home, to select one good book, and, in memory of the poor boy who half fed himself to gratify his taste for reading, present it as a new year's gift to the Boston Public Library. I make you that motion, Mr. Mayor, and I call upon all present to give me their voices; especially. I ask the coöperation of the fairer and the better part of creation. If nowhere else, woman's rights shall be respected in this hall, while I have anything to do with it. I pray you, Mr. Mayor, put the question, and then I'll finish my speech.

His Honor the Mayor then rose and stated the question, which was seconded by Mr. Winthrop. The Mayor particularly called on the ladies to vote, and a unanimous and emphatic aye resounded through the vast hall. The negative was then called, and no response made. His Honor, amidst great cheering, pronounced it a unanimous vote.

Mr. Everett resumed—

No, sir, if there is one lesson more than another directly deducible from the life of Franklin, it is the close connection of a thoroughly practical and useful life and career with books, libraries and reading. If there is a thing on earth which would have gladdened

his heart, could he have anticipated it, it would be the knowledge that his native city, in two generations after his death, would found a library like this, to give to the rising generation, and to the lovers of knowledge of every age, that access to books of which he so much felt the want. And could it be granted to him, even now, to return to his native city, which dwelt in his affections to the close of his life, his first visit would be to the centre of the ancient burial ground, where, in after life, he dutifully placed a marble slab on the graves of his parents; his second visit would be to the spot in Milk street where he was born; his third to the corner of Union street and Hanover street, where he passed his childhood, in a house still standing; his fourth visit would be to the site of the free grammar school-house, where, as he says in his will, he received "his first instruction in literature," and which is now adorned with the statue which a grateful posterity has dedicated to his memory; and his last and longest would be to this noble hall, where you are making provision for an ample supply of that reading of which "from his infancy he was passionately fond." The Trustees have done what they could to connect some reference to Franklin with an institution which would have been the object of his warmest affections, by providing that every Franklin medal boy shall be entitled to its privileges; and inasmuch as the accu-

mulating fund which he bequeathed to the city, and which now exceeds seventy thousand dollars, has proved almost wholly unavailing for the primary object of the bequest, it deserves consideration whether, when it has reached a sufficient magnitude, as it will before the end of this century, the interest of the fund, if it can be legally done, might not advantageously be appropriated, as a permanent endowment for the support of the library.

I have not proposed at this time, sir, on the part of the Trustees, to make a formal speech; I have preferred to let Benjamin Franklin speak for us. This day belongs of right to the Commissioners for building the library, ably represented as they are by our distinguished friend their President, who has done such ample justice to the subject; and to you, Mr. Mayor, as the organ of the City Government, whom I cannot but congratulate on closing your official career—in all respects so honorable to yourself and so acceptable to your fellow-citizens—by an act, I am sure, most grateful to your own feelings and most auspicious of the public good. It is not yet the time for the Trustees to speak. A more fitting opportunity may hereafter present itself, when the books shall be placed on the shelves, the catalogue printed, and the library opened for public use. Occasion may then, perhaps, with propriety be taken, to illustrate the importance and utility of such an insti-

tution; to do justice to the liberality on the part of the City Government and the individual benefactors by which it has been founded, endowed and sustained; and especially to the generosity of our greatest benefactor and esteemed fellow-countryman, Mr. Bates, whose letters announcing his first munificent donation of fifty thousand dollars, alluding to his own early want of access to books, assign that as the moving cause which prompted his liberality. It will be the pleasing duty of those who may then be intrusted with the administration of the library, to pay a fitting tribute to so much public and private bounty.

In the mean time, sir, we must throw ourselves on the patience and considerateness of the City Council and the community. Not much short of sixty thousand volumes are to be brought together from four different places of temporary deposit, and assigned to their final resting-places in this hall, and the circulating library below. Here they are to be arranged on the shelves, the cards and slips which pertain to them, far more numerous than the volumes themselves—reduced to alphabetical order; a separate catalogue of each alcove prepared; and a comprehensive catalogue of the whole collection, without which it will be little better than an unmanageable mass, prepared and printed. Every thing which could be done beforehand, has been anticipated; but much

of the work was of necessity reserved till the books should be placed on the shelves. In the interval, and while this labor is going on, the library in Mason street will be left in possession of the books most in request for daily circulation, and will be closed at last only when it becomes absolutely necessary that they also should be removed to the new building.

But it is time for me to conclude. The shades of evening are falling around us; those cressets which lend us their mild and tasteful illumination, will soon be extinguished; and the first day of the new year, rich in the happy prospects we now inaugurate, will come to a close. May the blessing of Heaven give effect to its largest anticipations! A few more days,—a few more years,—will follow their appointed round, and we, who now exchange our congratulations on this magnificent new year's gift of our City Fathers, will have passed from the scene; but firm in the faith that the growth of knowledge is the growth of sound principles and pure morals, let us not doubt, that, by the liberality of the City Government and of our generous benefactors at home and abroad, a light will be kindled and go forth from these walls, now dedicated to the use of the FREE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, which will guide our children and our children's children in the path of intelligence and virtue till the sun himself shall fall from the heavens.

Mr. Everett concluded his address at forty-five minutes past six o'clock in the afternoon, occupying about forty-six minutes in speaking. The audience then joined the choir in singing the following hymn to the tune of "Old Hundred."

H Y M N.

From all that dwell below the skies
Let the Creator's praise arise ;
Let the Redeemer's name be sung,
Through every land, by every tongue.

Eternal are thy mercies, Lord ;
Eternal truth attends thy word ;
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,
Till suns shall rise and set no more.

The exercises of the day were then closed by Rev. ARTHUR B. FULLER, pastor of the New North Church, who pronounced the following

B E N E D I C T I O N.

And now may the blessing of God, our Heavenly Father, rest upon this assembly. May the love of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, abide with us ; and when we and those by whose beneficence and labors this building has been reared ; when the countless throng who shall gather instruction from the volumes herein

to be placed shall all have laid aside this mortal body; when this goodly edifice itself, with all transitory things, shall have passed away; then, when "the dead are raised and the books of God opened," may we, and all interested in this occasion, find our "names written in the Lamb's book of life;" may we enter an edifice fairer than this, even that "building of God, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

by
ch
At precisely ten minutes before seven o'clock in the evening, the proceedings at the dedication of the library building terminated. Never had ceremonies of a similar character in Boston equalled these in interest, the assemblage of persons present preserving perfect decorum and stillness throughout the whole of the performances, and receiving the eloquent addresses of the occasion in a spirit that indicated warm sympathy and admiration. Every thing was arranged in the most acceptable manner, and was carried out with the greatest promptness and precision, much to the credit of the Committee of Arrangements and the marshals.

After the exercises of dedication were over, the building was inspected by the company, all the rooms and halls being brilliantly illuminated for the purpose, and the doors being thrown open to the public.

During the evening a sumptuous collation was given, in one of the halls, to the choir of young ladies, by the Committee of Arrangements, at which short speeches were made by His Honor the Mayor and several other gentlemen.

At a later hour of the evening, the Commissioners on the erection of the library building, the Trustees of the Library, the City Government, and some other invited guests were entertained by Mayor Rice, at his residence, No. 34 Union Park.

For several days after the dedication of the building the halls were lighted up in the evening, and were visited by the citizens, who expressed generally great satisfaction at the successful termination of the labors of the Commissioners.

On the following evening a social reunion of the Committee of Arrangements, the marshals of the day, and other persons who had taken special interest in the ceremonies of dedication, was held at the Parker House. Alderman Frost presided, with his usual ability, on the occasion. After the repast was concluded, speeches were made by Alderman Frost, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, Mayor Rice, Alderman Bonney and Mr. Pond, of the Commissioners, Dr. Shurtleff, of the Trustees, Capt. Bradlee, the Chief Marshal, Capt. Rogers, of the escort, Mr. Stevens, President of the Common Council, Mr. Healy, the City Solicitor, and other gentlemen. Before sepa-

ration the marshals took measures to preserve, within the archives of the library, a suitable memorial of the occasion, in response to the motion made by Mr. Everett, in his address.

Many books were received at the library as donations, in consequence of the motion offered by Mr. Everett and put to vote by the Mayor. Among these was a valuable work presented by the marshals, who each subscribed five dollars for the purpose. Scarcely a day has passed since the dedication that volumes have not been received. These will be preserved in the archives of the library as memorials of this pleasant event.

FINAL PROCEEDINGS.

FINAL PROCEEDINGS.

At a special meeting of the Board of Aldermen, held at City Hall on Saturday, the second day of January, A.D. 1858, the following resolutions of thanks, offered by Alderman J. M. Wightman, were unanimously passed, and subsequently approved by His Honor, Mayor Rice.

Resolved,—That the thanks of this Board, in behalf of the City Council, be presented to J. Putnam Bradlee, Esq., his aids and assistants, for the prompt, efficient, and courteous manner in which all their duties were performed, on the occasion of the dedication of the public library building, on the first instant.

Resolved,—That the thanks of this Board, in behalf of the City Council, be presented to Captain Charles O. Rogers, the officers and members of the Boston Light Infantry, for their complimentary and gratifying escort to the City Government and their guests, on the first instant.

Resolved,—That the thanks of this Board, in behalf of the City Council, be presented to the Rev. Baron Stow, D.D., and to the Rev. Arthur B. Fuller, who so ably and acceptably officiated on the occasion;—and to Charles Butler, Esq., and the pupils of the Girls' High and Normal School, for their valuable aid in the ceremonies of the dedication of the public library building.

The following order, offered at a meeting of the Common Council, was unanimously passed at the same meeting of the Board of Aldermen, and approved by His Honor the Mayor.

Ordered,—That the Committee of Arrangements for the Dedication of the Public Library Building be, and they are hereby, authorized and requested to cause to be printed, for the use of the City Council, the addresses delivered by the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, the Hon. Edward Everett, and His Honor the Mayor, on the first day of January, 1858, together with an account of the proceedings upon that occasion.

The Committee of Arrangements held a meeting on the fifth day of January, A.D. 1858. The chairman read the order passed by the City Council requesting the committee to publish an account of the proceedings at the dedication; whereupon it was

Ordered,—That the order of the City Council be referred to a sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. Oliver Frost, Joseph A. Pond and William Parkman, with full powers to publish the several addresses and an account of the proceedings at the dedication of the Public Library Building, with such other particulars connected with the institution as they may deem expedient.

Other orders relating to the collection of the necessary materials were also adopted at the same meeting.

The sub-committee immediately assembled and, after an interchange of opinions upon the nature and extent of the duty assigned to them, *Voted*, that the papers be placed in the hands of Mr. Pond, and that he be requested to prepare and publish an account of the dedication, together with a history and description of the building, in accordance with the views of the sub-committee, with authority to obtain such assistance as might be desirable in the performance of the duty.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

FACTS RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUBLIC LIBRARY IN BOSTON, AND THE ERECTION OF A BUILDING FOR THE SAME.

A PUBLIC meeting of the citizens of Boston was held at the Masonic Temple, in Tremont street, on the evening of the fifth of May, 1841, to consider the expediency of establishing a public literary and scientific institution and a system of international exchanges, as recommended by Mons. ALEXANDRE VATTEMARE, of Paris. His Honor, JONATHAN CHAPMAN, the mayor, presided and introduced to the audience the author of the proposed plan, who proceeded to unfold his project, which contemplated a union of the literary and scientific societies of the city, with their various and scattered libraries, into a grand, central institution, with a public library, a gallery of art, etc.

M. Vattemare also proposed the erection of a building by the citizens, or the government of the city, which should contain rooms for the united libraries and collections of the various societies. The building being thus the property of the people, in consideration of the amount paid for its erection, the whole people were forever to have free access to all that it might contain, with only such regulations as the safety and preservation of the property might demand.

After a resolution of thanks to M. Vattemare, and a pledge of cordial coöperation, the subject was referred to a

committee, consisting of Walter Channing, M.D., Rev. Ezra S. Gannett, Rev. George W. Blagden, and Charles Francis Adams, Esq., who, at a subsequent meeting, reported in favor of the project. They submitted detailed plans and estimates of the cost of a building, with ample accommodations for a large public library, paintings, statuary, etc. The committee urged the subject with the hope that soon such an institution might "arise amongst us, a monument of the public interest in good learning, and a noble means of gratifying that interest." They stated, however, that, "in looking around on the state of the country, and especially on the depressed condition of the industry of our own community, the committee have serious doubts about recommending a plan for present action, which must involve great expenditure of money."

Nothing further was done in the matter in six years. In the mean time, a collection of valuable books, numbering about fifty volumes, was received from M. Vattemare. The fact was communicated to the City Council by his Honor, MARTIN BRIMMER, the mayor, in a message, on the twenty-eighth day of November, 1843. The books were presented, through the intermediation of M. Vattemare, by the Municipal Council of the City of Paris, in exchange for works which had been transmitted to that distinguished body. They were deposited in the Mayor's office, in the City Hall.

A further donation from the same city arrived on the second of September, 1847. These were rare and useful works relating to the internal police of France, statistics upon subjects of general and local interest, and historical works, illustrated by engravings, making a collection of ninety-six volumes.

His Honor, JOSIAH QUINCY, Jr., the mayor, Aldermen THOMAS WETMORE and WILLIAM PARKER, and Councilmen RICHARD B. CARTER, GIDEON F. THAYER and WILLIAM EATON,

were appointed "a committee to report what acknowledgment and return should be made to the City of Paris, and to furnish a suitable place within the City Hall for the safe keeping of these volumes." Upon their recommendation, the Mayor was authorized to make a suitable acknowledgment, and to transmit a number of volumes to the authorities of Paris. It was then

Ordered, — That the room in the third story and southeast corner of the City Hall, be appropriated as the place of deposit, for the donations of the City of Paris and any other books of a similar nature that may belong to the city.

The subject of a "Free City Library" was engaging the attention of many of our influential and literary citizens before the arrival of these donations, which, it was hoped and believed, would form a nucleus, around which a new, popular and useful institution would speedily arise, and open its doors to the public.

On the fourteenth of October, in the same year, the Mayor sent a message to the City Council, strongly urging the formation of a public library, and announcing that "a citizen," (since ascertained to be Mayor Quincy himself,) "has offered to give to the city five thousand dollars, for the purpose of making a commencement, on condition that ten thousand dollars be raised for the same purpose, at large, and that the library be open to the public in as free a manner as consistent with the safety of the property."

This message was referred to the committee above named, with the addition of the President of the Common Council, BENJAMIN SEAVER, Esq., and Messrs. SAMUEL E. GUILD and JAMES WHITING, with instructions "to consider the expediency of commencing the formation of a public library, under the control and auspices of the city, with authority to receive donations for the same, either in books or money." At the

conclusion of an elaborate report, the committee recommended the passage of the following orders, which were unanimously adopted:—

Ordered,— That the City of Boston will accept any donations from citizens or others, for the purpose of commencing a Public City Library.

Ordered,— That whenever the library shall be of the value of thirty thousand dollars, it will be expedient for the City to provide a suitable place and arrangements to enable it to be used by the citizens with as great a degree of freedom, as the security of the property will permit.

This was the first official encouragement of the establishment of an institution, which, two years later, began to find favor with our citizens, and which, from a small beginning, has risen so rapidly in the public estimation and interest, as to place it among the most important of our permanent educational facilities.

In the year 1848, the "Joint Special Committee on the Library," of which Mayor Quincy was chairman, proposed a union of the City Library with the Boston Athenæum. For this purpose they entered into a negotiation with the Trustees, to render it a public institution, so far as its library was concerned. The Trustees voted, to "recommend to the proprietors that they should give to the public the use of the library, in as full a manner as it now is, or hereafter may be, enjoyed by the shareholders, on the following conditions: first, that there shall be paid to the Treasurer of the Athenæum the sum of fifty thousand dollars; second, that the City shall pay annually to the said Treasurer the sum of five thousand dollars, in quarterly payments, it being understood, that the management of the library shall be confided to ten Directors, six of whom shall be chosen by the Trustees, and four by the City Council." This proposition was, however, rejected by the proprietors, and the project failed.

In the year 1849, a considerable progress was made in forming the Public Library. Hon. EDWARD EVERETT tendered to his Honor, JOHN P. BIGELOW, the mayor, his large collection of congressional documents and state papers, together with many other valuable works, numbering about one thousand bound volumes. They embrace the most important documents from the foundation of the Federal Government, to the year 1840. On the thirty-first of October, one hundred and eighty-seven volumes of bound public documents were sent to the library by Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP. Two hundred and nineteen volumes were presented by J. D. W. WILLIAMS, Esq. Contributions of books followed, in rapid succession, from Hon. S. A. ELIOT, Dr. J. MASON WARREN and others, all of which were deposited and kept in the room in the City Hall appropriated for the purpose, under the charge of the Secretary of the School Committee, Mr. EDWARD CAPEN, the present efficient Librarian. No persons, however, were allowed to borrow the books excepting those officially engaged at the City Hall.

On the fifth of August, 1850, Mayor BIGELOW contributed *one thousand dollars* in aid of the establishment of the Public Library. This was regarded as a valuable donation, from the fact that it was the first money contributed, and was very gratefully received and funded by the City Council, who directed the Committee on the Library "to proceed, with as little delay as possible, to carry into effect the establishment of a Free Public Library."

On the seventh of August, Mr. Everett formally notified the City Council of his desire and intention to make the large contribution of books which he had previously promised, and which, he stated, had cost him a great amount of time, labor and expense to collect, whenever it would be convenient to receive them. In his letter, he says, "I hope it will not be thought intrusion in me to express the opinion, that, if the City Government would provide a suitable build-

ing for a public library, it would be so amply supplied, from time to time, by donations, that only a moderate annual appropriation for books would be wanted. If, on a lot of public land, a building were commenced, aiming at nothing but convenience and neatness, (and all attempts to go farther in architecture are almost sure to fail,) and so planned as to admit future enlargement, the first expense need not exceed that of one of those numerous school houses, of which the City does not hesitate to erect one every two or three years. The more retired the situation the better. The library ought not to be a show place for strangers, nor a lounge for idlers; but a quiet retreat for persons of both sexes who desire earnestly to improve their minds."

In a subsequent letter to the mayor, when a place of deposit had been provided, Mr. Everett again urged the importance of erecting a building for the Public Library, and said: "I remain of the opinion, which I took the liberty of expressing last year, that if the City would provide a suitable building, affording present accommodation for fifteen or twenty thousand volumes, and so constructed as to admit of enlargement hereafter, a valuable public library would very soon be formed by donation. A place of deposit thus provided, the library, I feel confident, would steadily increase. It would soon become an object of pride to the citizens of Boston, and every one would feel it an honor to do something for it."

The "Joint Standing Committee on the Public Library," for the year 1851, in their report, being City Document No. 79, earnestly commended the institution to the fostering care of the City Council, and referred "the question of an outlay for the erection of a suitable library building to a future City Council."

On the nineteenth of February, 1852, his Honor the Mayor sent a message to the City Council, as follows:—

HENRY J. GARDNER, Esq., *President of the Common Council.*

SIR:—I deem it expedient, at this early period in the year, to call the attention of the City Council to the present condition of the public library. It is now about four years since the legislature . . . passed an act authorizing the City of Boston to establish and maintain a public library, for the use of its inhabitants. Pursuant to this act, the City Council established a free public library, and appointed a committee to see to its interests. On their recommendation a small room on the third floor of the City Hall was appropriated to its use; and, although the number of books thus far received does not exceed four thousand volumes, more ample accommodations are already needed, in order to place the books in a condition for use. It can hardly be expected that our citizens will feel disposed to make liberal donations to the library before at least suitable rooms for the reception and safe keeping of books are provided. . . . There should be, it seems to me, no unnecessary delay in placing the library on such a foundation as will entitle it to, and secure for it, the fullest confidence of the community in its success and usefulness. . . .

In order to carry this institution into successful operation, I respectfully suggest that a librarian be appointed, and a large room or rooms, easy of access, in a central portion of the city, be secured, as the one now occupied has always been regarded more as a place for the deposit of books, than as a suitable situation for a permanent library. I would also respectfully suggest for your consideration the propriety of appointing a board of directors or . . . trustees for the public library.

The recommendations I have ventured to make will involve a small expenditure only, and will, I believe, bring to the library many times the amount required to carry them out.

BENJAMIN SEAVER, *Mayor.*

This message was referred to the Committee on the Library, who, on the twenty-ninth of April, submitted a report in conformity with the recommendations of the Mayor, and, also, the following order:—

Ordered, — That the Joint Standing Committee on the Public Library be, and they are hereby, authorized to procure suitable rooms for the deposit and arrangement of the books belonging to the Public Library."

A librarian and a board of trustees were elected, and they were "requested to report to the City Council upon the objects to be attained by the establishment of a public library, and the best mode of effecting them." This report, being City Document No. 37, was submitted on the sixth of July. After an able and forcible exposition of the subject, the Trustees remark, "the commencement of such a library should be made, of preference, in a very unpretending manner; spending such moneys as may be appropriated for the purpose, chiefly on books that are known to be really wanted, rather than on such as will make an imposing, a scientific, or a learned collection. . . .

"If it were probable that the City Council would deem it expedient at once to make a large appropriation for the erection of a building and the purchase of an ample library, and that the citizens at large would approve such an expenditure, the Trustees would, of course, feel great satisfaction in the prompt achievement of an object of such high public utility. But in the present state of the finances of the city, and in reference to an object on which the public mind is not yet enlightened by experience, the Trustees regard any such appropriation and expenditure as entirely out of the question. They look, therefore, only to the continuance of such moderate and frugal expenditure, on the part of the city, as has been already authorized and commenced, for the purchase of books and the compensation of the librarian; and for the assignment of a room or rooms in some one of the public buildings belonging to the city for the reception of the books already on hand, or which the Trustees have the means of procuring. With aid to this extent on the part of the city, the Trustees believe that all else may be left to the public spirit and liberality of individuals. . . .

"In order to put the library into operation with the least possible delay, the Trustees would propose to the City Government to appropriate for this purpose the ground floor of

the Adams school house in Mason street. They are led to believe that it will not be needed for the use of the Normal School proposed to be established in this building. It may be made, at a small expense, to afford ample accommodation for four or five thousand volumes, with an adjoining room for reading and consulting books, and it will admit of easy enlargement to twice its present dimensions. Such an apartment would enable the Trustees at once to open the library with five thousand volumes, a collection of sufficient magnitude to afford a fair specimen of the benefits of such an establishment to the city.

"Should it win the public favor, as the Trustees cannot but anticipate, it will soon reach a size which will require enlarged premises. These, as we have said, can be easily provided by the extension of the present room on the ground floor; and it will be time enough, when the space at command is filled up, to consider what further provision need be made for the accommodation of the library."

Upon the acceptance of the report by the City Council, it was

Ordered, — That the Committee on Public Buildings are hereby authorized to appropriate so much of the ground floor of the Adams school house, for the purpose of establishing and accommodating the Public Library as they may deem expedient, and to furnish such fixtures as may be necessary to carry out the plan of such a library as is suggested in said report.

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees, held for the purpose, a plan was submitted by Dr. NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF of the necessary alterations in the premises. It was then

Voted, — That the Committee on Public Buildings be requested to fit up the lower floor of the Adams school house, for the purposes of the Public Library, according to a plan approved at this meeting.

In October, 1852, a letter was received by the Mayor from JOSHUA BATES, Esq., a distinguished merchant of London, and a native of Boston, offering to pay for the books required to establish the library on a liberal scale, "thus leaving to the City to provide the building and take care of the expenses.

"The only condition I ask is, that the building shall be such as shall be an ornament to the City — that there shall be room for one hundred to one hundred and fifty persons to sit at reading tables — that it shall be perfectly free to all, with no other restrictions than may be necessary for the preservation of the books. What the building may cost, I am unable to estimate; but the books — counting additions during my life-time — I estimate at \$50,000, which I shall gladly contribute, and consider it but a small return for the many acts of confidence and kindness I have received from my many friends in your City."

An appropriate acknowledgment was made by the City Council, and it was

Ordered, — That whenever an edifice is constructed for the Public Library, the Trustees be, and they hereby are, directed to appropriate a suitable hall for the deposit and arrangement of statues, paintings, and other memorials of those persons who have distinguished, or shall hereafter distinguish themselves, by acts of liberality to the religious, charitable, or literary institutions of the city.

This munificent donation gave a powerful and efficient impulse to the enterprise.

In the year 1853, the City Council resolved to proceed with vigor. In his inaugural address, Mayor Seaver commended the institution to their prompt attention, adding, "the report of the Trustees, as it involves, in part, suggestions for the erection of a building, and for carrying forward the Library on a scale more ample than was at first contemplated, has not yet been made. But I feel sure that

our municipal authorities will faithfully do their part in this great work."

After the appointment and organization of the Committee on the Library, the following order was passed:—

Ordered,— That the Joint Standing Committee on the Public Library, in conference with the Board of Trustees, be, and they are hereby, authorized to procure and purchase a suitable site for the erection of a building, which shall be adequate to all the purposes for which the Public Library of the City of Boston has been established.

Under this order, the Committee and the Trustees met in convention on the twenty-sixth of February. The Mayor presented a plan, executed by Dr. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, one of the Trustees, "of an estate belonging to the heirs of the late Caleb G. Loring, intended to show that an edifice, adequate to the purposes for which the Library had been established, could be erected thereon." After examination and discussion, it was

Voted,— To authorize the Mayor to purchase the Loring estate at a price not exceeding four dollars per square foot.

The purchase was immediately effected by the Mayor, and the fact was communicated to the City Council on the seventeenth of March. Upon the same evening, in the Common Council, several remonstrances were presented, "against locating the free city library in Somerset street, because a more central situation should be fixed upon, having a regard to the location of existing public libraries, and, also, to the future population of the city; and, because a structure for such an institution should be so situated that its architectural beauties may be properly seen and appreciated, and so as to render it an ornament to the city and the pride of all her citizens." These remonstrances were signed by several hundreds of the citizens of Boston, and were, severally, referred to the Com-

mittee on the Public Library, who gave the parties a hearing. Messrs. A. W. GRISWOLD, E. F. HODGES, and E. HASKET DEBBY appeared for the remonstrants.

On the fourteenth of April, the committee reported, that the Loring estate could be sold to the First Baptist Society, at its cost, together with interest and incidental expenses, and that more eligible land for a site, situated in Boylston street could now be purchased. Whereupon, the following order was passed, viz:

Ordered,—That the Committee on the Public Library, in conference with the Board of Trustees be, and they are hereby, authorized to dispose of the Loring estate, purchased by the City for the Public Library.

About the time of the purchase of this land, another attempt was made to unite the Public Library and the Boston Athenæum. A proposition was made by several of the shareholders of that institution, to transfer their shares to the City, provided the remainder would sell their interest for a reasonable sum.

This was strongly opposed by others of the shareholders, and more particularly, by the venerable and honorable JOSIAH QUINCY, the sole survivor of the first five subscribers, who published a vigorous and able "Appeal in behalf of the Boston Athenæum." A meeting of the proprietors was called to determine the question, at which Mr. Quincy was present and very earnestly and eloquently entreated and conjured them to "put down, by an overwhelming majority, every attempt to transfer this sacred trust to the City Authorities." Fortunately, the counsels of the venerable sage prevailed, and, after a lengthened and heated discussion, the project was defeated.

While the negotiations for the sale of the lot in Somerset street were progressing, in the Common Council, on motion of PELHAM BONNEY, Esq., it was

Ordered, — That the Committee on the Public Library, in conjunction with the Committee on Public Buildings, consider the practicability and expediency of providing for the Public Library and further accommodations for the City Government, by erections on the City's land on School street, by additions to the present City Hall, or by an entirely new erection, for the two objects, upon the site of the present City Hall and lands appurtenant.

Two reports were submitted by the Committees to the City Council. The majority report, which was accepted, was as follows:—

That, after seeing the elegant and commodious plans prepared by a sub-committee, they have, by a vote of seven to four, declared "that it is impracticable and inexpedient to provide for the Public Library, either by erecting additions to the present City Hall, or by erecting upon its site and the lands appurtenant, a new structure, which shall provide accommodations for the City Government and for the City Library in one building."

For the Committee,

GEORGE W. WARREN.

The minority of the united committees, through Alderman BENJAMIN JAMES, submitted plans for a spacious building on the City Hall land, to answer the purposes of a public library and municipal offices. The apartments assigned to the library were in the third story, as follows: "One room on the west side, extending from front to rear, say one hundred and sixty feet by thirty-eight in the clear, which can be lighted both by windows on the sides and by sky lights, and capable of holding one hundred and fifty thousand volumes at least. When more room is required, that on the east side, of the same size as the one on the west, can be appropriated; and should more room then be needed, that over the Court square vestibule and stairway, measuring fifty feet by forty, can be

added: the latter would hold full fifty thousand volumes. It has been estimated that these rooms, packed as many libraries are, would contain over five hundred thousand volumes."

The City Council then decided, finally and wisely, to provide accommodations for the library in no other building than one erected exclusively for that purpose. The following order was then passed:—

In Common Council, June 30, 1853.

Ordered, — That the Committee on the Library, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, be requested to select a site for a library, secure the refusal of the same, and report to the Council.

The Board of Aldermen having concurred in this order, the Committee and the Trustees met in convention, and, after careful deliberation, agreed to submit the following report to the City Council:—

The Joint Standing Committee on the Library and the Trustees . . have attended to the duty assigned them, and respectfully submit, that after full deliberation, they recommend as a site for the library, the "Wheeler estate" and one adjoining it, on Boylston street, as the most eligible of any that have come to their knowledge, and recommend that these estates be purchased, provided it can be done at reasonable prices.

The Committee and the Trustees have deliberated upon the suggestion of fixing the site in the Public Garden; but many objections arise to this — among them, the difficulty and expense of obtaining a sure foundation, the extra cost of erecting a building in a position requiring that the four sides should be finished with regard to ornament, and also its exposed situation in the winter, rendering its use, at this important season of the year, more limited to our citizens, and especially the young, than is desirable.

BENJAMIN SEAVER, *Chairman of Committee on Public Library.*

EDWARD EVERETT, *President of the Trustees of Public Library.*

NOTE. After the Committee had separated, the undersigned received notice that an estate in Temple place, which, perhaps, would be suited to the wants of the Public Library, may possibly be obtained on favorable terms. The Council may, therefore, deem it advisable to include this location in any grant of power they may think it expedient to make to purchase a site.

BENJAMIN SEAVER.

EDWARD EVERETT.

The report was accepted, and the following order was passed:—

Ordered,—That the Committee on the Public Library, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, be authorized to purchase, under the direction of the Committee on Public Buildings, either of the sites indicated in the Committee's report of this date.

These three committees proceeded to the discharge of the trust devolved upon them, and authorized the Mayor to negotiate for two lots of land fronting on Boylston street, being the same on which the Public Library building has been erected. Their report was as follows:—

The Committee on the Public Library, together with the Trustees . . have, after very careful consideration, and under direction of the Committee on Public Buildings, purchased, as a site for the Public Library, the Wheeler estate and the dwelling house adjoining, . . containing about thirteen thousand three hundred square feet.

The material of the present buildings will be available when the City shall erect a library building. . .

The whole amount of purchase money for said estates is about seventy-three thousand dollars, for the payment of which the City Council are respectfully requested to provide the means.

BENJAMIN SEAVER, *Chairman of Committee on Public Library.*

EDWARD EVERETT, *President of the Board of Trustees.*

The Committee on Public Buildings, under whose direction the foregoing estates were purchased, respectfully unite in the above recommendation.

For the Committee,

BENJAMIN JAMES, *Chairman*.

This report was referred to the Committee on Finance, and, on their recommendation, the Treasurer was duly authorized to borrow the amount necessary to meet the cost of the land.

In the meantime, the Trustees continued to receive, from public-spirited citizens, valuable donations of money and books for the library, which had already acquired a strong hold upon the affections of the people.

A letter was received from Mr. JAMES NIGHTINGALE, enclosing one hundred dollars, "to be expended by the Mayor and Aldermen in furnishing any of the rooms of the said building, when the same is completed, or expend the same in the purchasing of books for the benefit and use of the said Library, as in their judgment may seem best."

The following is an extract from the second letter received from Mr. BATES:—

Be pleased to draw on me for a sum sufficient to contribute a fund of fifty thousand dollars, to be held by the City of Boston in trust, that its entire income, but only its income, shall in each and every year hereafter be expended in the purchase of such books of permanent value and authority, as may be found most needed and most useful, and that the City will, so soon as it may conveniently be done, provide, and always hereafter maintain, a suitable establishment for a Free Public Library, in which arrangements shall be made for the comfortable accommodation, at one and the same time, and at all proper hours of the day and evening, for at least one hundred readers.

Extract from a letter to the Mayor from N. I. BOWDITCH, Esq., dated November 4, 1853:—

DEAR SIR,—The City has at last completed its purchase of the Boylston street estates. I have traced the several titles back to the first settlement of the town—the book of possessions. My memoranda occupy more than twenty-five pages. One of the titles was extremely complicated. A late owner had left a will, untechnically drawn, which presented questions of difficult legal construction. One devise was to the testator's son for life with a remainder limited to his children, of such a character as to open and let in any after-born children. This son died about a year since. So long as he lived it would have been impossible to have obtained an indefeasible title by conveyances from *all* his children. There were eventually four minors interested in this estate, and their shares were sold under license of court—rendering necessary a careful examination of the probate proceedings. The fact, that two of the various deeds to the City convey, respectively, thirty-two forty-ninths of one third, and seventeen forty-ninths of one third of this estate, sufficiently shows the difficulties of the investigation. If my professional experience has been found of any slight service, . . . if the corner-stone of the City Library shall have been laid more securely through any instrumentality of mine in removing legal obstructions—I assure you that I feel myself to have been fully compensated by the opportunity thus afforded me of becoming a fellow-laborer in a good cause.

A generous donation of ten thousand dollars was made, in this year, by Hon. JONATHAN PHILLIPS.

The first annual report of the Trustees was submitted to the City Council on the twelfth of November. After congratulating the government and the public upon the condition and prosperity of the Library, they proceed to speak of the proposed building as follows:—“The eligible lot of land purchased on Boylston street, unites, in a greater degree than any other which could be obtained, all the important conditions for such a purpose, and is believed to be very generally approved by the public. The situation is central; it admits of enlargement on either side, if hereafter required; it can never be overlooked in front; and it commands a view of the Common, which secures to it unobstructed light and

air, and as fine a prospect as can be enjoyed in any city of the world. The Trustees are confident that on this spot a building may be erected, at moderate cost, which, besides answering the primary purposes of the library, will be an ornament to the city.

"Such a building will necessarily occupy two or three years; and it is of the utmost importance to the prosperity of the Library that the plan should be in the best taste; that it should combine all the most recent improvements in library buildings; and that such a plan, once adopted, should be carried out to its completion with steadiness. To attain these ends, the Trustees respectfully submit to the City Council that it might be expedient to confide the superintendence of the structure to a commission specially appointed for that purpose, whose duty it shall be to adopt a plan for the building, employ a well-qualified architect, make the necessary contracts, and generally be responsible for the work. Such a commission might consist of a member of each branch of the City Council, . . . and of a certain number of citizens elected at large. Thus constituted, the commission will, on the one hand, be kept in constant and intimate relations with the City Government for the time being, while, on the other hand, it will be able to preserve that unity of counsel and purpose which is essential in the execution of a work of a somewhat novel and highly important character."

Of their present accommodations, they remark, "The Library cannot be opened to the public until after the end of December, when the outer of the two rooms now appropriated to it in Mason street will cease to be required as a ward room, and can be fitted up as a reading room, where above a hundred American and European periodicals, together with the books in the library, will always be conveniently accessible. But even after both rooms are within the control of the Trustees, the accommodations in Mason

street will be too small; and before a proper building can be erected, they will be found insufficient even for putting on convenient shelves the books that will have been received."

On the fifteenth of December, the Committee on the Library reported, that they concurred in the recommendation of the appointment of special commissioners, to whom shall be confided the erection of the new library building, and were of the opinion that the commission should consist of one member from each branch of the City Council, one from the Board of Trustees, and two citizens at large. The subject, however, was referred to the next City Council.

On the twenty-fourth of January, 1854, by invitation of the Trustees, the City Government visited the rooms newly fitted for the library, to which the books in the City Hall had been removed. The reading room was opened to the public on the twentieth of March, and the circulation of books for home use commenced on the second day of May.

On the twenty-sixth of January, the report of the previous year, recommending the appointment of commissioners, was referred to the new Committee on the Library. They subsequently reported that they "unanimously concur with the Board of Trustees in the great necessity of appointing a permanent board, who shall be responsible for the faithful and judicious performance of the important trust confided to their care; and, in accordance with these views, the Committee recommend the adoption of an ordinance providing for the establishment of a Board of Commissioners on the erection of a Building for the Public Library of the City of Boston."

The ordinance reported by the committee (City Document No. 21) was opposed, partly from an objection to the proposed location, and partly from an opinion that the erection of the building belonged rather to the Committee on Public Buildings than to a special commission, and was rejected.

The following order was offered by Alderman GEORGE ODIORNE, and passed, viz:—

CITY OF BOSTON: *In Board of Aldermen, March 20, 1854.*

Ordered,—That the Committee on the Public Library take into consideration the expediency of locating the building to be erected for the Public Library on some portion of the land known as the Public Garden, and report upon the subject.

Passed: sent down for concurrence.

J. V. C. SMITH, *Mayor.*

In Common Council, March 23, 1854. Concurred.

ALEXANDER H. RICE, *President.*

Another order was soon adopted, "that the Committee on Public Buildings, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, be, and they are hereby, instructed to report the outline of a plan and estimates for a library building, which shall be adapted to the site owned by the City on Boylston street, and commensurate, both in its capacity and design, with the intention and wishes of the noble benefactors."

On the twenty-eighth of September, the Committee on the Library having made no report upon locating the building upon the Public Garden, the papers were ordered to "be taken from the hands of said committee, and referred to a joint special committee," consisting of Aldermen G. ODIORNE and JOSIAH DUNHAM, Jr., and Messrs. GEORGE W. WARREN, J. AMORY DAVIS and JOHN R. MULLIN of the Common Council. They reported that, "after mature deliberation, they are unanimously of the opinion, that the interests of the Public Library and the faith of the City, pledged to its generous benefactor, JOSHUA BATES, Esq., demand the immediate erection of a building upon the site already purchased in Boylston street."

On the ninth of November, the second annual report of the Trustees was presented. They urged the City Council to proceed without further delay. "The present rooms," say

they, "were regarded merely as a temporary provision, and are already found wholly inadequate to the proper management of such an institution, and to the demands daily made on it by our citizens. The reading room is noisy, uncomfortable and unfit for its peculiar purposes. The interior, or proper library room, is no better. It is small, and so nearly filled with books that it will soon be impossible to find places for more. Notwithstanding great diligence and promptitude on the part of the Librarian and his assistants, aided by an admirably contrived system for the search and delivery of books asked for, it is manifestly impossible, in premises so contracted as those now appropriated to the library, with an average of three hundred persons daily resorting to it, to prevent occasional delay and crowd. It is hoped by the Trustees that the convenience of more than six thousand citizens who have already subscribed their names for the use of the library, and to whose number additions are daily made, will be thought by the City Government to merit their earliest attention."

On the ninth of November, the ordinance for establishing a Board of Commissioners, which had been rejected by the Common Council, under a suspension of the rules, was reconsidered and adopted. See City Document, No. 120.

On the eleventh of December, the following gentlemen were duly elected Commissioners, under the ordinance, viz: HON. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, LL.D., SAMUEL G. WARD, HENRY N. HOOPER, GEORGE TICKNOR, LL.D., NATHANIEL B. SHURTLIFF, M.D., Alderman GEORGE ODIERNE, and GEORGE W. WARREN of the Common Council. All of these gentlemen accepted the appointment excepting Henry N. Hooper, Esq., whose declination was received by the City Council on the twenty-first of December.

The Commissioners assembled at the Library in Mason street, on Wednesday, the twentieth of December, and proceeded to organize the Board by the choice of Hon. ROBERT

C. WINTHROP for President. Edward Capen, Esq., the Librarian, acted as Clerk, agreeably to the provisions of the ordinance. The President was then "requested to apply to the City Council for an appropriation of two thousand dollars, to cover the expense of procuring plans for the Library Building, and other preparations for erecting it."

On the twenty-eighth of December, another discussion took place upon the propriety of erecting the building upon the Public Garden, when an order passed both branches of the government, authorizing the Commissioners "to locate the building upon the lot upon Boylston street, if, in their opinion, it be deemed expedient.

Upon the reception of this order by the Commissioners, it was unanimously voted by them, "that in the opinion of this Board, the lot of ground on Boylston street, purchased as a site for the Public Library Building, is a suitable place for the location of said building, and that measures be taken to procure plans accordingly." Plans of the land, and other preparations, were immediately made.

On the twenty-sixth of January, 1855, the Board issued a public notice of their readiness to receive designs that might be submitted to them on or before the fifteenth of March, accompanied by a carefully considered statement of the requirements of the building.

The general requirements were

1. That the building be completely and absolutely fire-proof.
2. That thorough provision be made to guard against dampness from any cause, and all other influences injurious to books.
3. That every part of the building be well lighted.
4. That the best mode of heating and ventilating be provided for, having in view the health and comfort of persons frequenting the Library, as well as the preservation of books and other property.

5. That proper provision be made for the introduction and use of gas by stationary fixtures, and also for the introduction of water wherever it may be needed.

6. That such general arrangements be made as will best ensure centralization, so that the Librarian and his assistants can be readily informed of all comers and goers, and that the care of the library may be intrusted to as few officers as possible.

The special requirements were

1. A library hall, capable of containing, at least, two hundred thousand volumes. The alcoves, or other divisions of this hall, are to be easily accessible from each other. All the divisions and shelves are to be so contrived as to follow strictly the decimal system; that is, each of its principal and lesser divisions is to be in series of tens. The shelves are to be fixed, and not movable.

2. A general reading room, with ample accommodations for at least one hundred and fifty readers at tables.

3. A special reading room, for ladies, with seats for at least fifty persons.

4. A room for the delivery of books to borrowers, which may be used as a conversation room, with accommodations sufficient for at least two hundred persons.

5. A library room, connected with the foregoing, in which not less than twenty thousand volumes of books most constantly demanded for circulation, may be arranged on the decimal system.

6. A Trustees' room, of moderate proportions.

7. A Librarian's room, etc.

On the ninth of March, the Commissioners submitted their first report to the City Council. After detailing their proceedings to that date they state that "they propose that the front of the building be of brick, with stone dressings; not excluding, however, the use of iron where needed.

"In conclusion, the Commissioners cannot omit to say, as

the result of their personal experience and observation, while attending the stated meetings of the Board, at the rooms now used for the Public Library, that they have a deep sense of the importance of proceeding with the work intrusted to them, as promptly and as rapidly as may consist with safety and success" . .

"A simple but substantial structure, ample in its dimensions, just in its proportions, absolutely fire-proof, and depending for its effect rather upon its adaptation to the use for which it is designed, than upon any ornamental architecture or costly materials, is what is aimed at by the Commissioners; and they hope and believe that such a building may be erected without any undue expense or any unreasonable delay."

A room in the Tremont Temple was rented by the Commissioners, and, on the twenty-third of March, the designs which had been received were there opened and examined.

The attention of the City Council was called to the vacancy in the Board, owing to the original appointment having been declined by Mr. Hooper. About this time, the resignation of ex-Alderman George Odiorne was received and accepted, when the Committee on the Library, who had the subject under consideration, upon examining the ordinance, discovered that it contained no provision, as had been intended, for the annual election of two members of the City Council as commissioners. The Committee, therefore, on the twenty-ninth of March, reported "an ordinance in addition to an ordinance, providing for the establishment of a Board of Commissioners on the erection of a building for the Public Library of the City of Boston."

Section first provides, that there shall be chosen annually, until the building shall be completed, one member of the Board of Aldermen and two members of the Common Council, who shall hold their office until "others are elected in their stead, and who shall, with the following Commissioners

now elected, viz: Robert C. Winthrop, Samuel G. Ward, George Ticknor and Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, constitute a Board of Commissioners for the erection of the Public Library Building of the City of Boston. The four persons last named shall hold their office until the completion of said edifice."

Section second provides, that "they shall select a proper plan and design for the edifice, make contracts for all the labor and materials, superintend the building thereof, and shall have the sole charge, care and responsibility of the building, warming, lighting, ventilating, draining, and furnishing the edifice."

Section third provides for the publication of notices for proposals for contracts, etc.

Section fourth provides, that the "Commissioners shall meet at stated periods, and cause a record of their proceedings to be kept, and for this purpose the Librarian of the Public Library shall act as their clerk; and they shall make a report of their doings to the City Council, once in six months, and oftener, if thereto required by a vote of the City Council."

Section fifth requires the Superintendent of Public Buildings to perform such services as may be demanded of him by the Commissioners.

This ordinance having been adopted, and having received the approval of the Mayor, the City Council proceeded to the election of Commissioners, as required, and duly elected Alderman CHARLES WOODBERRY and Messrs. JOSEPH A. POND and BRADBURY G. PRESCOTT of the Common Council. Mr. Prescott having declined the appointment, EDWARD F. PORTER, Esq., was elected.

These gentlemen, with the permanent Commissioners named in the ordinance, assembled at the room in the Tremont Temple on the fourteenth of April, when the Board

was reorganized, and the designs, twenty-four in number, were reopened.

Twelve meetings, each of an average length of more than two hours, were devoted to the examination of the designs, many of which afforded gratifying proof of the advanced state of architectural knowledge and taste in the community. On the twenty-seventh of April, the Commissioners proceeded to the selection of a design, by ballot, and that of Mr. CHARLES KIRK KIRBY, which most nearly coincided with their ideas, was adopted.

On the fifteenth of May, the following public notice was inserted in the newspapers:

The Commissioners on the erection of a building for the Public Library will receive Sealed Proposals, until Friday, the first day of June next, at 12 o'clock, M., for furnishing and laying, by the thousand, all the bricks, and furnishing and setting, by the perch, all the rough stone, required in the construction of the building; also for furnishing and setting the hammered stone, by the foot, and furnishing and setting the iron required, according to the plans adopted by the Commissioners, etc.

Plans, specifications and working drawings can be examined after the twenty-second instant, and information obtained at the office of C. K. KIRBY, Architect, etc.

ROBERT C. WINTHROP,
SAMUEL G. WARD,
GEORGE TICKNOR,
NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF,
CHARLES WOODBERRY,
JOSEPH A. POND,
EDWARD F. PORTER,

Commissioners.

Eleven proposals were received, of which the most favorable, for the whole work, had been made by Mr. NATHAN DRAKE, a well known and experienced mechanic of this city.

On the sixth of June, the Commissioners transmitted their second report to the City Council. The report states

that they "propose at present to contract for the brick, stone and iron work of the frame of the building, leaving the interior finish to be more carefully estimated and contracted for hereafter. They are unanimously of opinion that the building now proposed to be erected will be a substantial, convenient and ample edifice, absolutely fire-proof, and that it will present a front on the Common, which, without any ostentatious ornament, will do no discredit to the taste of our city. They respectfully ask for an appropriation, for the purpose of carrying out the design that has been adopted."

Upon the acceptance of the report an order was adopted "that the Treasurer be authorized to borrow . . a sum of money not exceeding ninety-five thousand dollars, and that the same be appropriated to meet, in part, the cost of the erection of the Public Library Building, in conformity with the report of the Commissioners."

On the fourteenth of June, the contract by and between the City of Boston, represented by the Commissioners, of the first part, and Nathan Drake, mason, of the second part, received the signature of each member of the Board and of Mr. Drake, in the presence of his Honor the Mayor, and the Clerk and Architect of the Commission.

The rooms in Mason street having been entirely filled, the Trustees applied to the City Council for additional apartments for the temporary deposit of books. This application was referred to the Committee on Public Buildings, who immediately placed at the disposal of the Trustees two small rooms in the Quincy school house, in Tyler street.

The following orders for the purchase of additional land, passed the City Council, by a very large vote:

CITY OF BOSTON: *In Common Council, July 5, 1855.*

Ordered, — That the Treasurer be, and he is hereby, authorized to borrow . . a sum not exceeding twenty-four thousand dollars, the same

to be applied to the purchase of a lot of land, situated on Van Ransaleer place, and adjoining the land upon which the Public Library building is being erected; said lot, or a portion thereof, to be added to the library estate.

Passed; yeas 40, nays 1. Sent up for concurrence.

JOSEPH STORY, *President.*

In Board of Aldermen, July 9, 1855. Concurred; yeas 9, nays 3.

WILLIAM WASHBURN, *Chairman.*

July 12, 1855. Approved.

J. V. C. SMITH, *Mayor.*

It was also

Ordered,— That the Committee on Public Buildings be, and they hereby are, instructed to purchase forthwith the lot of land on Van Ransaleer place, and that, when said purchase is effected, the land shall be added to the library estate, and placed at the disposal of the Commissioners on the erection of the building.

The Committee referred the subject to a sub-committee, consisting of Alderman SALMA E. GOULD and Councilmen ARTEMAS STONE and JOSEPH A. POND, who proceeded to purchase the land, and, on the fourth of August, they formally notified the Commissioners that the same had been added to the library estate, and placed at their disposal.

The Commissioners were constantly and actively engaged, with the regular attendance and assistance of the Architect, in the discharge of their duties, frequent meetings being held at the Mayor's office, City Hall. In order to guard the interests of the City, Messrs. David Granger and William Sparrell, surveyors, were appointed "to inspect and measure the work, from time to time, as the Architect may direct."

On the fifth of September, the Commissioners formally notified the City Council that the work was in such a state of forwardness, that the corner-stone might be laid on the seventeenth instant. A committee of arrangements was

appointed, and, at the request of the Commissioners, the corner-stone was laid with appropriate ceremonies, on Monday, the seventeenth day of September, at four o'clock, P.M., by his Honor, J. V. C. SMITH, the mayor, in presence of the City Council, and a great concourse of people. On this occasion, an eloquent and appropriate address was delivered by Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, the President of the Commission.

As soon as information was received by Mr. BATES, the munificent patron of the library, in London, that the erection of the building had been commenced, he addressed a letter to the Mayor, in which he says,

I learn with great satisfaction that the building for a free public library, for which such liberal appropriations have been made by the City Council, is in progress of erection. . . It has been with the greatest pleasure that I have, from time to time, learned that even under the disadvantage of temporary and inconvenient premises for the arrangement of its books and the accommodation of those who use them, it has found great favor with the community and with many liberal individuals, and has already given promise of becoming an ornament and a blessing to the City.

It is, I understand, certain, that within two years a building will be completed of dimensions amply sufficient for the reception at once of a large number of books, and for the regular future increase of the library. . . It is desirable and important to render this free public library at once extensively useful as a large collection of books in as many departments of human knowledge as possible. For this purpose I now propose, in addition to the fund of fifty thousand dollars already constituted, to purchase and present to the City a considerable number of books in trust, that the same shall always be accessible, in a convenient and becoming library building, to the inhabitants of Boston generally, under such regulations as may be deemed needful by the persons to whom the government of the institution may, from time to time, be confided.

This new and liberal offer was gratefully accepted, with suitable acknowledgments, by the City Council, and it was

Resolved,—That the Mayor be desired to request Mr. Bates, in the name of the City of Boston, to sit for his bust, in marble or bronze, at his pleasure, and to any artist he may select, in order that it may be placed in the building of the Public Library, as an enduring memorial of the City's obligation and gratitude.

The letter and the action thereon were sent to the Trustees, who, on the eighteenth of October, reported, that "the rooms in Mason street and in the Quincy school house can contain no more books than will, in the course of the next two months, be placed in them, independently of the large additions offered by Mr. Bates. The Trustees, therefore, find themselves wholly without means to meet the requirements made upon them. They have nowhere to put the books that Mr. Bates is about to send. In consequence, they ask the City Government for a further appropriation, to be expended in hiring suitable premises where shelves may be immediately erected, and the books be opened, aired, catalogued and arranged; in paying for the services of the persons who will, necessarily, be employed in this work; and in meeting the incidental expenses, so that the books can be put upon the shelves of the new building as soon as that structure shall be completed. Otherwise, a year or more will be lost before the books can be prepared, in the new building, for public use. Besides which, the Trustees would not, willingly, be held responsible for the injury to which the books will certainly be exposed, unless other premises than they now possess are provided."

This communication was referred to the Committee on the Library, who subsequently reported "that the rooms appropriated to the library are already filled to overflowing, so that no more books can be placed in them, nor can their capacity be enlarged. A commodious building should be rented without delay, where they may be received and prepared to take their places upon the shelves of the new building. . . Three thousand dollars, it is believed, will be needed

to provide suitable premises, to shelve, warm and light the rooms for use, and to pay the persons who will be indispensable to prepare the books for circulation."

The necessary appropriation having been made, the subject was referred by the Trustees to a sub-committee, who reported that they had rented "the house No. 13, on the east side of Boylston place, for the reception and preparation for use of books that have been or may be received from Mr. Bates, or otherwise."

On the thirteenth of November, the third annual report of the Trustees was received. Of the new building they remark:

"The plan of the building, it is believed, includes the most recent improvements in the construction of public libraries. It will be completely fire-proof, being almost wholly constructed of stone, brick and iron. A double outside wall will secure it from dampness, and it will be thoroughly warmed and ventilated. It will contain convenient rooms for readers, for the consultation of books, for the circulating department, for the main collection, for the reception, unpacking and preparation for the shelves of the books from time to time received, and for the various other miscellaneous purposes of a first-class public library. The addition liberally made to the original lot upon Boylston street, by the purchase of the intervening piece of ground on Van Rensselaer place, besides the great advantage of access in the rear, will afford an opportunity for large future addition to the building, should such addition become necessary. The front view, on the Common, is unsurpassed for air, prospect and beauty, and can never be obstructed. In a word, the Trustees feel confident that the building, when completed, though without any pretensions to ostentatious magnificence, which were wisely avoided, will be found to compare favorably with any public building in the world, of its size and kind, for position, convenience, and adaptation to the purposes for which it was designed. It will be regarded, they

doubt not, both by the present generation and in after times, as a noble monument to the liberality of the City Government, which has furnished the means for its erection."

On the third of December, the Commissioners submitted their third report to the City Council, being City Document No. 59.

The delays necessarily arising out of the purchase by the City of the additional land in the rear, having conspired, with other causes, to prevent the building from being roofed as early as had been anticipated and agreed upon, on the twenty-second of the same month, by order of the Commissioners, the Architect proceeded "to construct a temporary roof over the building, without delay."

On the seventeenth of January, 1856, the annual election of Commissioners from the City Council was made, and PELHAM BONNEY, Esq., Chairman of the Board of Aldermen, and Messrs. JOSEPH A. POND and JOSEPH BUCKLEY of the Common Council, were chosen.

Active preparations were now made for the interior finish of the building. Plans, specifications and models were executed. In order finally to determine the question whether the shelves should be fixed or movable, on the second of April, it was

Ordered,—That the Trustees be requested to furnish this Board with their opinion in regard to movable shelves.

The President was then "instructed to request a sufficient number of experts to furnish him with their opinions in regard to movable shelves, together with the reasons on which their opinions are based." Letters were accordingly addressed to J. G. Cogswell, of the Astor Library, New York; J. MacMullen, of the New York Society Library; C. Folsom, of the Boston Athenæum; J. S. Meyer, of the Congress Library, Washington; G. H. Moore, Librarian of

the New York Historical Society; W. F. Poole, Librarian of the Boston Mercantile Library Association; J. L. Sibley, Librarian of Harvard College; S. B. Woolworth, of the New York State Library. Replies from these gentlemen having been received, the following opinion of the Trustees was read:—

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON.

In Board of Trustees, April 15, 1856.

Resolved,— That, in the opinion of this Board, it is expedient that, in the new library building, the shelves above the counters should be fixed, and those below the same be so adjusted as to be movable.

It was thereupon voted, by the Commissioners, “that the recommendation of the Trustees be adopted.”

On the twenty-third of April, in consequence of the increased space in the rear, it was

Ordered,— That the towers of the building be extended two and a half feet beyond the line agreed upon in the contract.

On the twenty-second of May, a letter was received by his Honor, ALEXANDER H. RICE, the mayor, from GEORGE TICKNOR, Esq., resigning his place in the commission, on account of “arrangements for an absence from the United States.” The City Council proceeded to fill the vacancy thus created, and Hon. EDWARD EVERETT, LL.D., was elected.

In parting from their associate, the Board adopted the following resolution: “that the Commissioners have learned with sincere regret, that the proposed absence of Mr. Ticknor from the country has induced him to resign his seat at this Board, and they desire to express to him their deep sense of his faithful and valuable services during his connection with them, since the organization of this Board, and their cordial wishes for his prosperity and welfare.”

The plans and specifications for the interior finish having been carefully prepared and approved, a public notice was issued, inviting proposals for furnishing the materials and performing the work for the interior construction of the building.

On the twenty-third of July, contracts were entered into and signed by the Commissioners, in the presence of his Honor the Mayor, with MORRISON & SHAW, carpenters; DENIO & ROBERTS, blacksmiths; A. WENTWORTH & Co., marble workers; PHILIP & THOMAS KELLEY, plaster and stucco workers; LUCIUS NEWELL, painter and glazier; and STRATER & BUCKLEY, plumbers.

The fourth report of the Commissioners informed the City Council of the progress of the building and of the plans for the interior finish. "A public notice for proposals for furnishing materials and executing this part of the work was issued on the twenty-eighth day of April last, agreeably to which, twenty-eight separate proposals were received, opened and examined by the Commissioners, on the twentieth day of May. On a careful examination of these proposals the Board have come to the conclusion, after frequent comparison and much consideration, that a sum of not less than sixty thousand dollars will be necessary for the completion of the outside and inside of the library building.

"The Commissioners have not included in this estimate the cost of the furniture and book-cases, nor of the fences which may be required in front and in the rear of the library lot."

Upon the reception of this report, the following order was passed:—

CITY OF BOSTON: *In Common Council, June 5, 1856.*

Ordered, — That the Treasurer be, and he hereby is, authorized to borrow . . . a sum of money not exceeding sixty thousand dollars, and that the same be appropriated to meet, in part, the cost of the erection

of the Public Library building, in conformity with the report of the Commissioners, dated the third instant.

Passed; yeas 33, nays none. Sent up for concurrence.

OLIVER STEVENS, *President*.

In Board of Aldermen, June 9, 1856. Concurred; yeas 10, nay 1.

PELHAM BONNEY, *Chairman*.

Approved June 13, 1856.

ALEX. H. RICE, *Mayor*.

In July, the City Government purchased some additional land, in consequence of the following message from Mayor RICE.

MAYOR'S OFFICE, BOSTON, JULY 14, 1856.

To the City Council.

GENTLEMEN, — I have the honor to communicate the fact, that an opportunity is now offered, in which the City may purchase a small strip of land adjoining the estate of the Public Library, and belonging to J. H. Wolcott, Esq. . . It is desirable for the purpose of securing light and air for the library building, as well as to secure the premises against the erection of objectionable buildings in the future, that this land should be purchased by the City.

I am authorized to state that Mr. Wolcott will sell the land to the City, for the purpose intimated, at the same price which was paid for corresponding land on which the library building now stands. Regarding this measure as intimately connected with the convenience and ornament of this valuable institution, I cordially recommend the proposed purchase to the favorable consideration of the City Council.

Very respectfully,

ALEX. H. RICE, *Mayor*.

After the reading of the message, it was

Ordered, — That the Committee on Public Buildings be authorized and instructed to purchase a strip of land adjoining the Public Library lot, . . provided the same can be purchased on terms as favorable as those upon which the adjoining lands were purchased by the City.

This Committee subsequently reported, through their Chairman, Alderman JOHN T. DINGLEY, that they had effected the purchase of the land.

The fifth report of the Commissioners was received by the City Council on the fourth of December. It states that "the progress of the building has been all that could reasonably have been expected. The exterior has been finished and the stagings removed, and the various contractors are proceeding with the interior as rapidly as the character of the work will allow.

"The Commissioners cannot conclude their report without gratefully acknowledging the wise forethought of the City Council in purchasing the vacant strip of land on the westerly side of the library building. This piece of land has now been added to the library lot, and the walls enclosing it are nearly completed. It will add materially to the light and ventilation of the edifice, and nothing further seems to be required to secure for the institution the whole advantages of the site selected for it."

Upon the application of the Trustees, on the seventeenth of the same month, it was voted by the Commissioners, "that the room in the basement under the large reading room, be placed at the disposal of the Trustees for the temporary deposit of cases of books."

On the nineteenth of January, 1857, the annual election of persons to represent the City Council in the Commission, was held, and Alderman PELHAM BONNEY and Messrs. JOSEPH A. POND and WILLIAM PARKMAN, members of the Common Council, were chosen.

On the twenty-ninth of April, the Board submitted its sixth report, of which the following is an extract:—

"The undersigned are now ready to contract for the shelving of the Library, having received and examined proposals therefor, and they have reason to fear that any further delay in executing this part of their commission may

postpone the completion of the building beyond the time heretofore contemplated for that purpose. . . With a view to covering this item of outlay, and also of providing for the cost of the fences, and any contingencies which may occur in finishing so extensive an edifice, the undersigned request an appropriation of fifty thousand dollars, for the further prosecution of the trust committed to them."

The appropriation having been granted, on the twentieth of May, in presence of his Honor the Mayor, the Commissioners signed a contract with MORRISON & SHAW, for the shelves for the circulating library room and for the lower range of alcoves in the main hall. At the same time, a contract was made with WILLIAM SCHUTZ, artist, for painting and ornamenting the walls and ceilings of the large hall, the vestibule, the reading rooms and the conversation room.

Contracts were also made with BALDWIN & EMERSON, for constructing a sidewalk, and with EDWARD F. MEANY, for sandstone for the fence in front of the building; also, with MORRISON & SHAW, for the erection of stagings for the use of the decorators.

The rooms in the west tower having been completed, on the twenty-fourth of June, the Commissioners assembled and held the first meeting in the new building, which, thereafter, became their regular place of meeting.

The seventh communication of the Board to the City Council, was as follows:—

"The undersigned . . have had a careful estimate prepared of the payments still to be made, under contracts already existing, and of such additional payments as will be required in finishing and furnishing the building. In conformity with this estimate . . they ask a final appropriation of the sum of sixty thousand dollars, to enable them to meet the liabilities mentioned.

"The authorized transfer, by the Auditor, of eleven thousand and eight hundred dollars from the amount heretofore

appropriated to the use of the Commissioners, and its expenditure in purchasing an addition to the Library lot, has increased, by that amount, the appropriation now required. The same proceeding has exhausted the means at their disposal at an earlier period than had been anticipated."

This application was referred to the Committee on Finance, and, upon their recommendation, the appropriation was made by the City Council.

On the fourth of November, occurred the only casualty connected with the erection of the entire structure. About one o'clock, a man named Thomas Rowan, who was engaged in painting on the outside of the building, sitting upon a scaffold which projected from one of the towers in the rear, missed his hold and fell, a distance of about sixty feet, to the ground. In his fall, he struck an iron door and was instantly killed. Contributions in aid of his family were made by the Commissioners, members of the City Government and others.

On the tenth of November, the fifth annual report of the Trustees was received. They remark, "All the operations of the Library during the year, as in former years, have been carried on to the same disadvantage that has been mentioned in former reports of the Board, in consequence of the limited extent of the premises in Mason street. These disadvantages will all speedily cease, by the completion of the spacious new building in Boylston street, although some time will be required after the surrender of the building by the Commissioners, before the books can be placed upon the shelves, and a catalogue be printed which shall be adapted to the new locality, and without which the books cannot be put in circulation. The Trustees propose, however, while most of this unavoidable labor is going on in the new building, to keep open the Library in Mason street as usual, closing it only for the removal

of the books contained in it, and for the shortest time possible."

On the first day of January, 1858, the Commissioners assembled at the Library building and, after authorizing the President to deliver up the keys to the Mayor of the City, they proceeded to the platform erected in the large hall, when the ceremonies of dedication took place. A full detail of the same will be found upon the preceding pages.

The building having been dedicated, it was found that, in consequence of the great concourse of people attending upon the ceremonies and visiting it upon the succeeding day, various parts of the building had been injured to a considerable extent. For the purpose of making the necessary repairs, as well as to provide the furniture required, and to adjust all claims against the Board, meetings of the Commissioners were continued at stated periods.

On the fourth of February, the repairs having been completed, it was

Ordered, — That the Clerk be directed to notify the Trustees of the Library, that nothing remains to be done that can interfere with the removal of the books at as early a day as they deem proper.

Immediately upon receiving this notice, the Trustees commenced the removal of the volumes presented by Mr. Bates, from the house in Boylston place.

After these books, which number about twenty-five thousand volumes, and are valued at nearly forty-five thousand dollars, had been placed in the main hall, upon the invitation of the Trustees, the City Council visited the Library, for the purpose of examining this munificent donation.

The books stored in the Quincy school house, and a portion of those in Mason street, were next removed to the new building, to be placed upon the shelves prepared for them.

The closing meeting of the Commissioners was held on Tuesday, the twenty-seventh day of April, at the residence of the President, No. 1 Pemberton square.

A committee, previously appointed for the purpose, reported that all claims against the Board, arising out of the erection and furnishing of the library building, had been adjusted and that the labors of the Commission might now be terminated.

The eighth and final report was then read by the President, and the same was adopted and ordered to be signed by the Commissioners, and transmitted to the City Council by the Clerk:

To the Honorable, the City Council:—

The Commissioners on the erection of a Building for the Public Library of the City of Boston, have the honor to submit their final report:—

The Commissioners have proceeded, during the last three months, to complete such arrangements, in regard to fixtures and furniture, as were necessarily postponed until after the public dedication of the library building on the first day of January last.

The building itself is finished, and has been, for some time past, in the exclusive custody of the Janitor appointed by the Trustees of the Library. The principal articles of furniture have been procured, and are already in the places for which they were designed. The contracts have all been discharged, and every bill has been paid. Under these circumstances, the undersigned are of opinion that the Commission may now be dissolved without detriment to the public interests.

An unexpended balance, of two hundred and twenty-four dollars and six cents, of the original appropriation of two thousand dollars, made for the purpose of procuring a design for the building and for the incidental expenses connected with the commencement of the enterprise, has been handed to the City Auditor, with a statement of the account in detail.

Of the other appropriations, so liberally made by the City Government, for the prosecution of the work, no part has ever been drawn from the treasury, except for the payment of bills which have been duly exam-

ined and certified at the time, and all of which remain on the files of the Auditor of Accounts, and are copied into the records of the Commission.

The Board have already, through their President, expressed an opinion that a suitable remuneration might well be made by the City Council to the faithful officer who was originally assigned as clerk to the Commission. The testimony to his services, borne publicly at the late dedication of the building, is too recent to require repetition on this occasion. The records of the Commission, containing the details of one hundred and sixty-two meetings of the Board, will be delivered up, at an early day, to those from whom he received his appointment, and will furnish the best evidence of his attention and fidelity.

The undersigned cannot conclude their final report, without a grateful acknowledgment of the confidence with which they have been honored by the City Council in the prosecution of the work committed to them, nor without a renewed expression of their earnest hope that the institution, in whose service they have been engaged, may fulfil the best hopes of its founders and friends.

ROBERT C. WINTHROP,
SAMUEL G. WARD,
NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF,
PELHAM BONNEY,
JOSEPH A. POND,
WILLIAM PARKMAN,
Commissioners.

The absence of Mr. Everett at the South, prevented him from signing the foregoing report.

The following resolution was then offered by Mr. Pond:

Resolved, — By the Commissioners on the erection of a building for the Public Library, that this Board hereby tender to their President, the Honorable ROBERT C. WINTHROP, the cordial expression of their sense of the highly satisfactory manner in which he has fulfilled the duties of his office; of his faithful and valuable services as a Commissioner; and their sincere wishes for his prosperity and welfare.

In offering the resolution, the mover briefly alluded to the agreeable relations which had existed, in the last three years, between the Commissioners, and, particularly, to the uniform kindness and courtesy which had marked the intercourse of the President with all the members of the Board. He desired, before dissolving their official connection, that the clerk should be directed to enter upon the records, a suitable expression of the sentiments of the Board, of their affectionate respect for the President, and of their wishes for his prosperity and welfare, both in public and private life.

The resolution having been adopted, the President, with evident emotion, returned his cordial acknowledgments to the Board, for so kind an expression of their satisfaction with the discharge of the duties which had been assigned to him. He was conscious, he said, that the labors of others had been not less onerous than his own, and he desired to offer to them all, his own best thanks for the fidelity and zeal with which they had coöperated with him in conducting the Commission to a successful close. It was among the most agreeable circumstances of the service which was now about to terminate, that it had brought him into fellowship with so many intelligent and estimable members of the City Council, who had served successively on the Board, and of whom the most responsible committees had so often been composed. He would not detain them with any ceremonious remarks, but begged each one of his associates to accept his sincere wishes, that the best blessings of Heaven might attend him in all his relations and pursuits.

The following resolution was offered by Mr. Bonney and adopted:

Resolved, — That the thanks of the Board be presented to Edward Capen, Esq., for his acceptable and faithful services as clerk to the Commission, during the whole period of its existence.

The clerk was directed to prepare and deliver to the City Clerk the book of records and all papers belonging to the Board, and then the Commissioners adjourned, *sine die*.

The final report of the Commissioners was received by the City Council on the twenty-ninth of April, and was referred to the Committee on the Public Library, who subsequently reported, as follows:—

CITY OF BOSTON: *In Common Council, May 13, 1858.*

The Committee on the Public Library, to whom was referred the final report of the Commissioners on the erection of a Building for the same, would respectfully recommend, that the report be accepted.

As a slight acknowledgment of the zeal, industry and ability displayed by the Commissioners, in the discharge of the duty devolved upon them, the Committee would further recommend the passage of the accompanying resolution.

For the Committee,

SAMUEL HATCH, *Chairman*.

Resolved,—That the thanks of the City Council be, and they are hereby, presented to the gentlemen who have served as Commissioners on the erection of the Public Library Building, for the highly acceptable and successful manner in which they have fulfilled the trust committed to them; and also, for the very valuable and distinguished services which they have gratuitously rendered in aid of an institution, which is an enduring monument of the enlightened liberality of our citizens in the cause of literature and free popular education, in the advantages of which, every class of the community may freely participate.

Passed unanimously: sent up for concurrence.

SAMUEL W. WALDRON, JR., *President*.

In Board of Aldermen, May 17, 1858. Read and concurred.

JOSEPH M. WIGHTMAN, *Chairman*.

Approved, May 18, 1858.

FREDERIC W. LINCOLN, JR., *Mayor*.

At a meeting of the Board of Aldermen, held on the seventeenth day of May, his Honor Mayor Lincoln presiding, Alderman Wightman submitted an order, which was adopted, instructing the Committee on Public Buildings "to place in one of the recesses prepared for such purposes in the vestibule of the Public Library Building, a suitable tablet of stone or bronze, bearing" an inscription of the date of the laying of the corner-stone, and of the dedication of the building, together with the names of the Commissioners on the erection of the Library Building, of the Architect, etc. This order, on motion of Hon. NEWELL A. THOMPSON, was referred, by the Common Council, to the Committee on the Public Library, who were authorized to report a suitable inscription for the proposed tablet. In this reference, the Board of Aldermen subsequently concurred.

THE LIBRARY ESTATE.

The land, upon which the Public Library Building has been erected, was purchased in four parcels. In the year 1853, the City Council bought a lot of land of Robert E. Apthorp, and, also, the adjoining estate, belonging to the heirs of Benjamin Wheeler. Additional land in the rear and upon the westerly side, was subsequently purchased, in order to afford an enlarged space in front of the building, and to secure increased facilities for the admission of light and air.

The first lot was purchased of Mr. Apthorp, and was bounded as follows: by a line running easterly on Boylston street, *twenty-four feet and eight inches*; thence running southerly, along house numbered thirty-seven, *one hundred and thirty-seven feet and two inches*; thence westerly, *ninety-one feet and two inches*; thence northerly, on the Wheeler estate, *one hundred and thirty-seven feet*. This lot contained *three*

thousand seven hundred and ninety and one half feet, and cost twenty-two thousand seven hundred and forty-three dollars. The deed of the same to the City of Boston is dated 12 October, 1853, and is recorded with Suffolk County Deeds, Lib. 653, Fol. 101.

The second purchase comprised what was commonly known as the "Wheeler estate." It was bounded northerly on Boylston street, *seventy feet*; easterly on the land purchased of Apthorp, *one hundred and thirty-seven feet*; southerly on land since purchased of Apthorp, *seventy feet*; and westerly on land since purchased of J. H. Wolcott, *one hundred and thirty-seven feet*. The cost of this land was fifty thousand dollars. The deeds of the heirs, William B. Fosdick, Alice S. Wheeler, George P. and Mary Blake, and George P. Wheeler, to the City of Boston, bearing date 3 November, 1853, are entered with Suffolk Deeds, Lib. 654, Fols. 123, 124, 125.

The third lot was situated on Van Rensselaer place, in the rear of the two lots above described, and was purchased of Harrison O. Apthorp, of Northampton, and Robert E. Apthorp, of Boston. It contained seven thousand six hundred and sixty-two and one half square feet. Its boundaries are given as follows, viz: "Beginning at the southwest corner of the City Library lot, running easterly and bounded northerly, in the rear, *one hundred and one feet and three inches*, to the southeast corner of said lot; thence turning and running southerly and bounded easterly by land of Apthorp, *seventy-eight feet and three inches*, to a point on Van Rensselaer place, distant from Tremont street *one hundred and fourteen feet*; thence turning and running westerly and bounded southerly by Van Rensselaer place, *ninety-nine feet and two inches*, to land of J. H. Wolcott; thence turning and running northerly and bounded westerly by land of Wolcott, *seventy-four feet and eight inches*. The amount paid for this land was twenty-two thousand nine hundred and eighty-seven dollars

and fifty cents. The deed, which bears date 24 July, 1855, is recorded with Suffolk Deeds, Lib. 684, Fol. 195.

The land last purchased contained *two thousand three hundred and forty-one and three fourths feet*. It was bought on the eighth of October, 1856, of J. Huntington Wolcott, for the sum of eleven thousand seven hundred and ninety-six dollars and fifty cents. It is described as "situated upon the southerly side of Boylston street and bounded northerly, *twelve feet and seven and one half inches*; westerly on land of Wolcott, *two hundred and eleven feet and five and three fourths inches*; southerly on Van Rensselaer place, *nine feet and six inches*; easterly on land of the City of Boston, *two hundred and twelve feet*." The deed is recorded in Suffolk Registry of Deeds, Lib. 707, Fol. 299.

The old buildings upon the lots on Boylston street were sold at public auction by SAMUEL HATCH, Esq., on the thirty-first of May, 1855. Those upon the rear lot were sold by the same auctioneer, on the seventh of April, 1856. The trees, shrubs, loam, etc., were removed under the direction of the Superintendent of the Common and Public Squares.

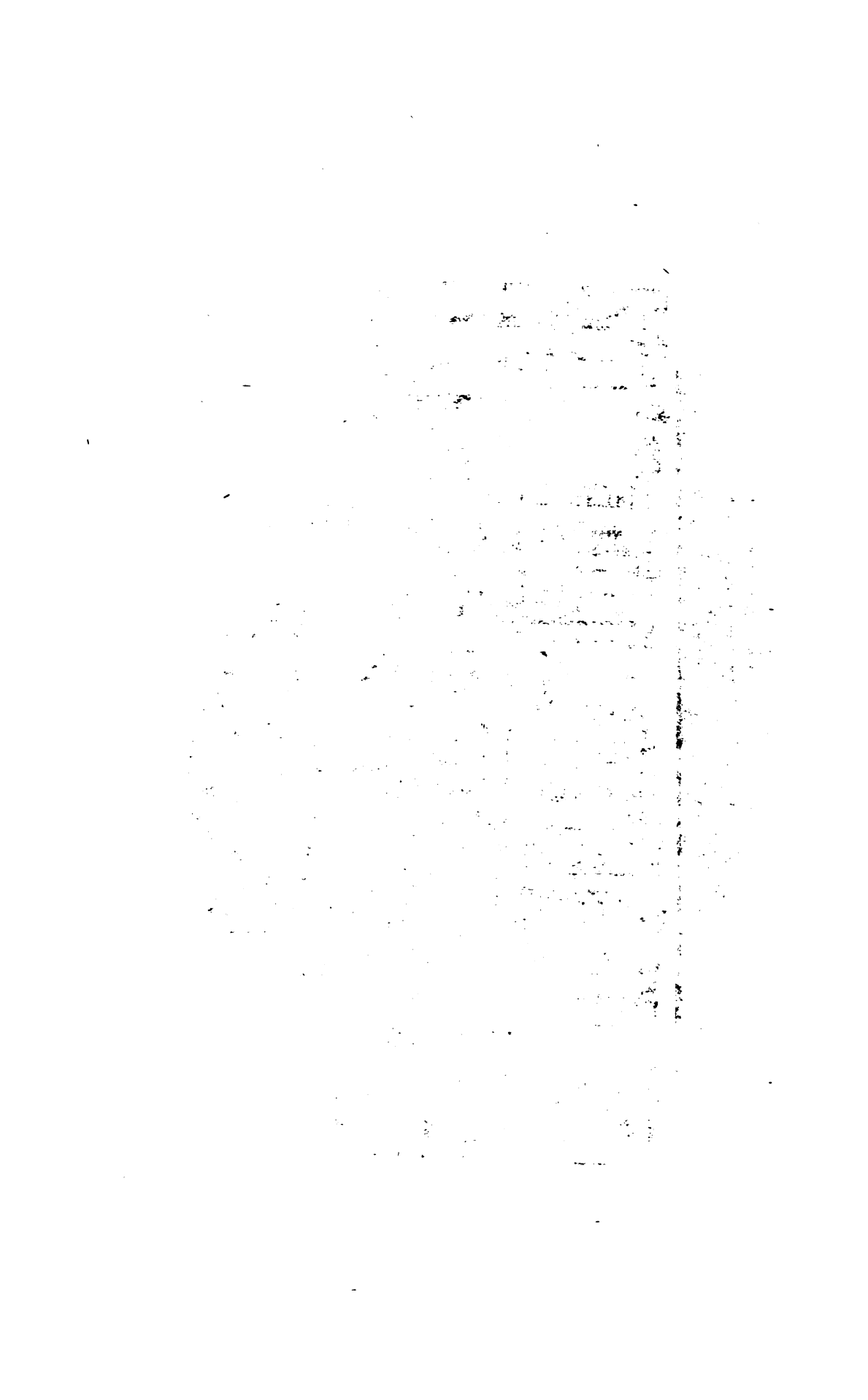
With the premises purchased, the City acquired no right or means of draining into the common sewer, and the temporary occupants of the old stable on the rear lot being unwilling to grant any privileges, the Commissioners were obliged to pay damages, according to the following award:—

BOSTON, NOVEMBER 1, 1855. The subscriber finds that the Commissioners should pay to Messrs. Healy & Spaulding the sum of three hundred dollars, for the privilege of draining over the estate now occupied by them for a stable.

G. M. DEXTER, *Referee*.

The entire lot measures, on Boylston street, *one hundred and seven feet and three and three fifths inches*; on Van Rensselaer place, *one hundred and eight feet and eight inches*; on the





easterly side, *two hundred and fifteen feet and six and seven eighths inches*; on the westerly side, *two hundred and eleven feet and three fifths of an inch*.

● DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING.

EXTERIOR.

The building is rectangular, being *eighty-two feet wide, and one hundred and sixteen feet long*, exclusive of the towers at the rear corners, which are *fourteen feet and six inches in length, and eighteen feet in width*. The architecture is of the Roman Italian style. The foundation, upon which the walls rest, is composed of blocks of granite, about four feet in length, set and bedded in hydraulic cement. Upon these is laid a base course of hammered granite, above which the exterior walls, excepting the front, are plain, being constructed of the best quality of faced bricks, with dressings of Connecticut sandstone. The front of the basement is constructed of the best quality of Rockport granite, finely hammered. Two stories in height are seen from the front. In the first story in front are four windows, with a door in the centre. The windows are circular-headed, capped with ornamental archivolts, supported on carved scroll brackets, and crowned with treble keystones. The doorway is also circular-headed, and its style ornate, having deeply moulded and carved jambs, with a carved and vermiculated architrave, and with projecting canopies or hoods, supported on brackets and crowned with keystones, all of which are ornately carved.

In the second story of the front are three large windows and two conspicuous niches. The niches are constructed of freestone, with heavy, projecting bases carved in foliage and finished with ornamented architraves. Between the first and second stories are a rustic belt and a heavy, projecting bal-

cony, enclosing the front windows of the main hall, and supported upon carved scroll brackets. The corners or angles of the building are finished with heavy rustic work, the whole being surmounted with a rich Corinthian cornice.

The roof is constructed of iron, covered with copper. The lantern, by which the main hall is chiefly lighted, occupies the centre of the roof, and is *forty feet wide, ninety feet long, and ten feet high*. It is built of bricks and freestone, with a roof of iron, covered with copper.

The building is entirely fireproof. It is thoroughly ventilated through the vaultings of the walls, by openings at the bottom and top of each of the rooms.

The corner-stone is a massive hammered ashler of Connecticut sandstone, weighing five tons, and is securely laid at the northeast corner of the foundation. In the lower face of the stone, within a cavity, is a box containing a silver plate, suitably inscribed, various city documents, coins, medals, photographs, etc. There is, also, in the same cavity, a leaden box containing a copy of each of the weekly and daily newspapers published in the city, seventy in number.

The front of the building recedes fifteen feet from the line of Boylston street, the intervening space being enclosed by a massive fence of Italian style, constructed of freestone and iron. On either side is a space for light and air, and in the rear is a large area, which has been filled, graded and prepared for flowering plants, ornamental shrubs, etc. These grounds are protected by an iron fence resting upon a granite base.

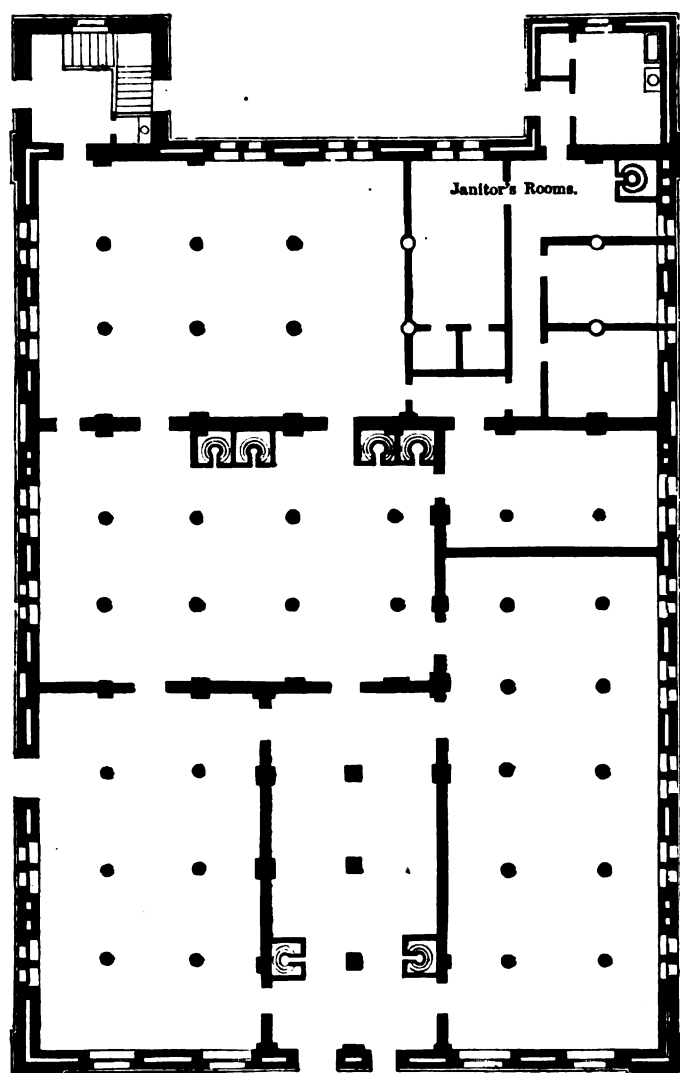
From the top of the building a magnificent panoramic view can be obtained, embracing the whole of the city, the harbor, and the surrounding cities and towns.

INTERIOR—THE BASEMENT.

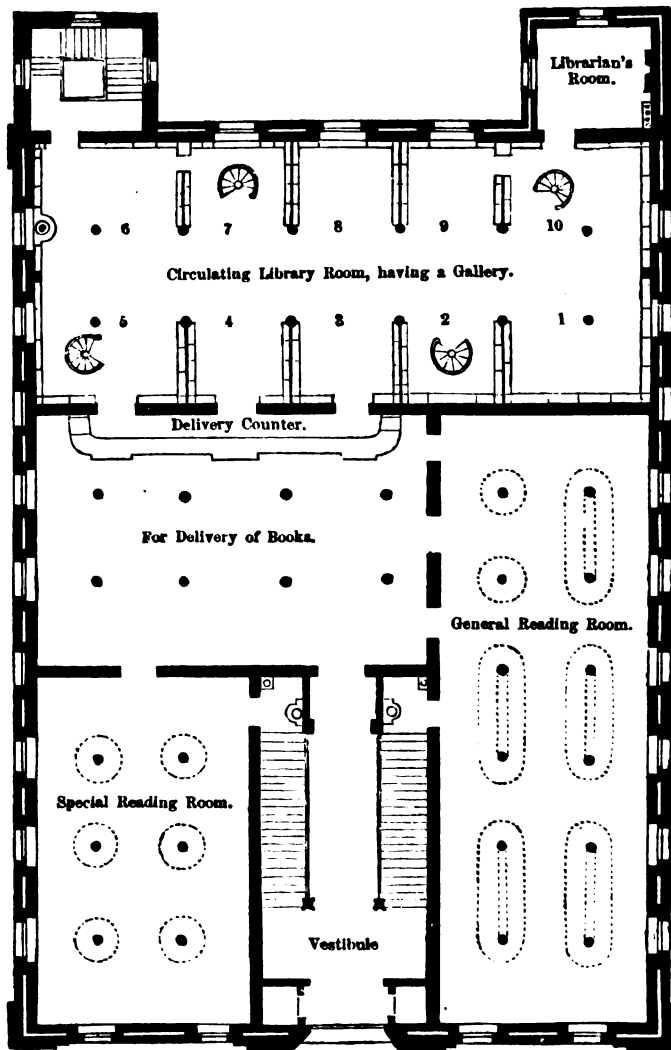
The basement, which is light and airy, is almost entirely below the grade of Boylston street. It is *eleven feet high*,



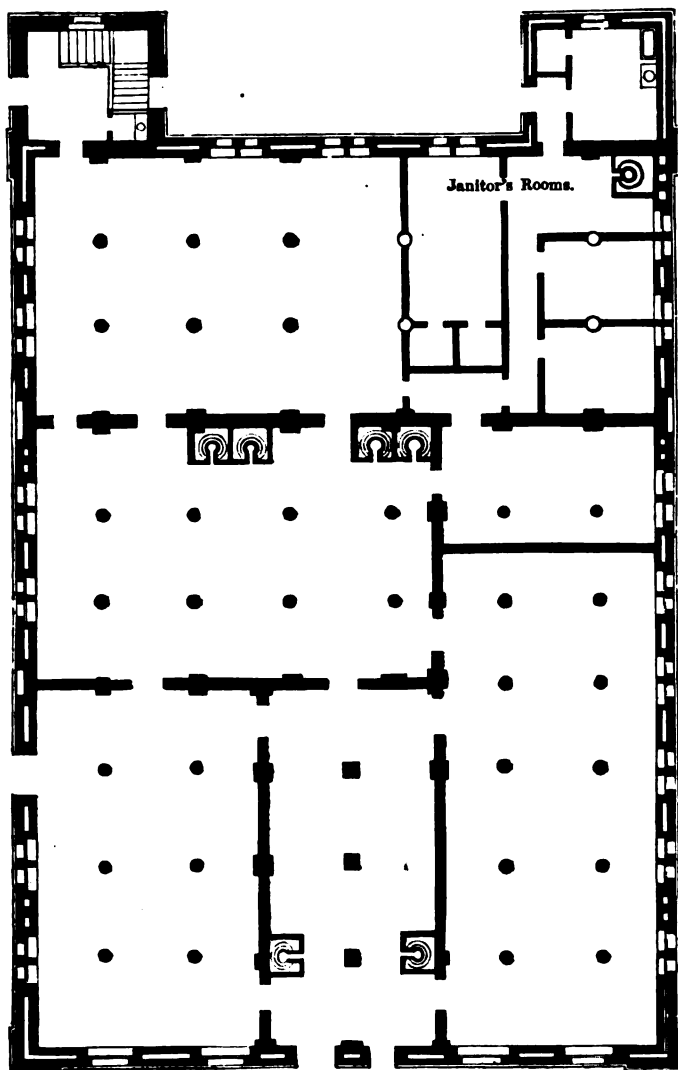
BASEMENT.



BASEMENT.

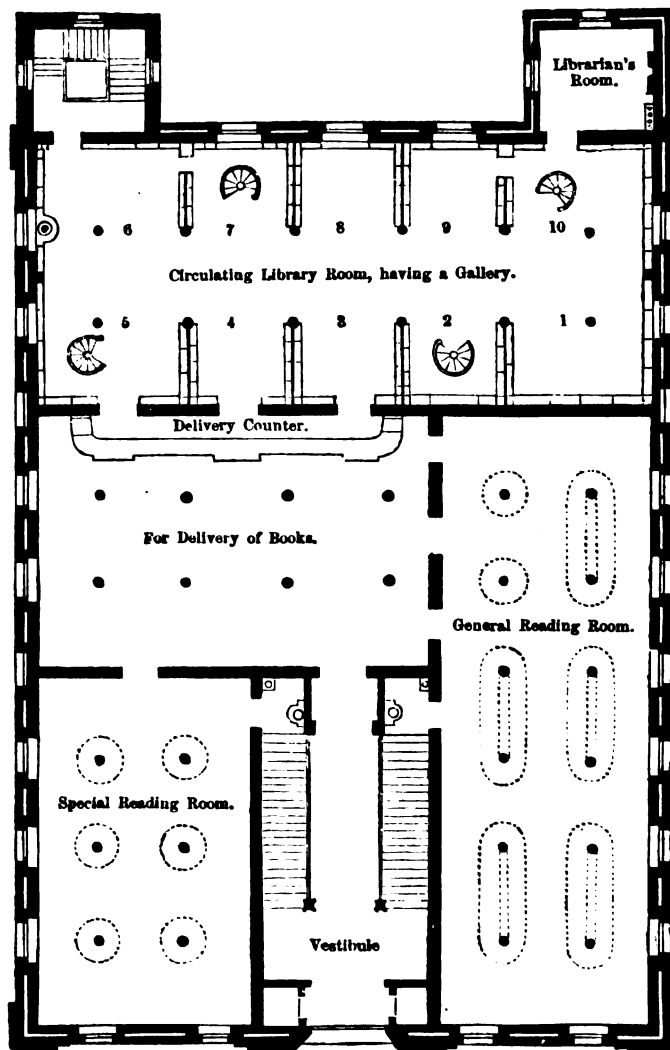


FIRST STORY



BASEMENT.





FIRST STORY

DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING.

in the clear, to the spring of the groined arches, a room contains six large and convenient rooms, which will be found for unpacking and storing books and newspapers, and for other conveniences of the library. The furnaces for warming the apartments and the rooms for fuel are also in this portion of the building. The basement is approached from Van Rensselaer place, by doors in the towers. There is also an entrance on the easterly side of the building.

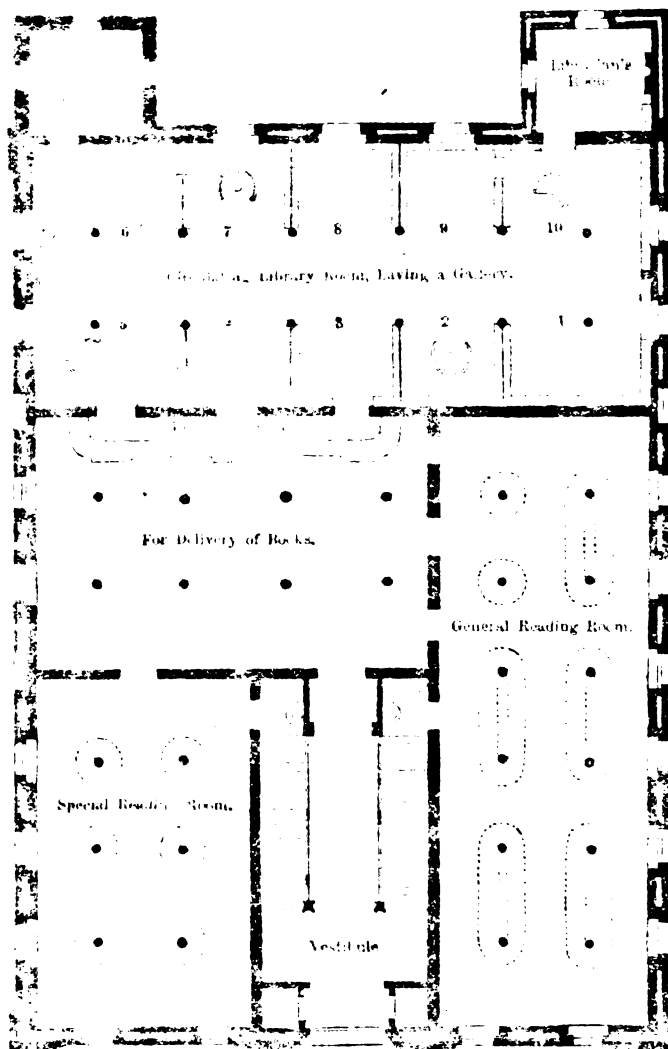
FIRST STORY.

The first story is *twenty-one feet and six inches high*. The floor is constructed with groined arches. This story contains five apartments, separated by brick partitions. They are designated as follows:—vestibule, general reading room, special reading room for ladies, room for consulting, and the delivery of books, and room for the electric apparatus.

A spacious entrance, through three sets of double doors, leads to the vestibule, which occupies the central portion of the front part of the building, and is *thirty feet wide, forty-four feet deep, and twenty-two feet high*.

It contains the main staircase, which commences with two flights, each six feet wide, both leading to a platform at an elevation of ten feet, from which a single flight of eight steps ascends to the main hall. In the original design of the Architect, which was altered by the Commissioners, the grand hall was directly accessible from the vestibule by slightly winding staircases, and the view from the entrance door to the main ceiling was unbroken.

The staircase is constructed of iron, laid on brick arches and bedded in cement, in order to prevent the noise usually made in passing over iron stairs. The flooring of the vestibule is of encaustic tiles. The walls, to the level of the platform above mentioned, are plainly finished with plaster-work, and thence to the ceiling with Corinthian pilasters, scagliola and arched panels, formed with arabesque designs.



FIRST STORY

in the clear, to the spring of the groined arches, and contains six large and convenient rooms, which will be used for unpacking and storing books and newspapers, and for other conveniences of the library. The furnaces for warming the apartments and the rooms for fuel are also in this portion of the building. The basement is approached from Van Rensselaer place, by doors in the towers. There is also an entrance on the easterly side of the building.

•
FIRST STORY.

The first story is *twenty-one feet and six inches high*. The floor is constructed with groined arches. This story contains five apartments, separated by brick partitions. They are designated as follows:—vestibule, general reading room, special reading room for ladies, room for conversation and the delivery of books, and room for the circulating library. A spacious entrance, through three sets of richly carved doors, leads to the vestibule, which occupies the central portion of the front part of the building, and is *twenty-two feet wide, forty-four feet deep, and twenty-two feet high*. It contains the main staircase, which commences with two flights, each six feet wide, both leading to a platform at an elevation of ten feet, from which a single flight, ten feet wide, ascends to the main hall. In the original design of the Architect, which was altered by the Commissioners, the grand hall was directly accessible from the vestibule by slightly winding staircases, and the view from the entrance door to the main ceiling was unbroken.

The staircase is constructed of iron, laid on brick arches and bedded in cement, in order to prevent the noise usually made in passing over iron stairs. The flooring of the vestibule is of encaustic tiles. The walls, to the height of the platform above mentioned, are plainly finished in block-work, and thence to the ceiling with Corinthian pilasters in scagliola and arched panels, formed with archivolts, sup-

ported upon pilasters and imposts, the whole being crowned with a full, rich Corinthian cornice and entablature, supporting an ornate ceiling, laid off in square panels, deeply sunk, relieved with heavily carved mouldings, pendent drops, etc.

The vestibule is lighted, in the evening, by two lanterns, with carved rosewood columns, standing upon newel posts of Italian marble.

The room for the delivery of books, which is also the conversation room, is entered from the vestibule, and occupies the central portion of the east side of the building. It is *thirty-four feet wide, fifty feet deep, and twelve feet high*. This room forms a kind of inner vestibule, with delivery counters for the circulating library, and entrances to the general and ladies' reading rooms. It is finished in a plain manner. The floors and bases are marble, and the walls and ceiling are laid off in panel work.

The special reading room, for ladies, occupies the north-east front corner of the building, and is *twenty-seven feet wide, forty-four feet deep, and twenty-one feet and six inches high*. It is intended to accommodate one hundred readers, having six circular tables, for books and papers, surrounding the elaborately ornamented iron columns which support the ceiling. The walls and ceiling are tastefully laid off in panel work, exquisitely tinted and gilded. The arrangements for lighting this room, as well as all the other rooms, are complete and ample.

The general reading room is in the northwest corner of the building. It is *twenty-eight feet wide, seventy-eight feet long, and twenty-one feet and six inches high*. It is finished and furnished in a style similar to the special reading room, having every needful accommodation, with water closet, etc. It will accommodate two hundred readers.

Almost all the walls, ceilings and finish throughout the building have been neatly tinted in encaustic colors, relieved with gold.



PRINCIPAL FLOOR

The room for the circulating library occupies the remainder of the first floor, being upon the south end of the building. It is *seventy-eight feet long, and thirty-four feet wide*. It has shelves for forty thousand volumes, and will contain the books most frequently demanded for home use. It is plainly finished, with iron balconies and circular stairs, and is connected with the basement and upper parts of the building by an iron staircase in the east tower, and with the main hall by circular iron stairs. It may also be put in communication with the main hall by means of the dumb-waiters, which connect the rooms on all the floors.

INTERMEDIATE STORY.

Beneath the principal story, and immediately over the delivery room, is an entresol, or half story, *nine feet high*, in the clear, and *thirty-four feet square*. It contains a work room, store rooms, etc., and is entered from the balconies of the circulating library room. A flight of circular stairs also connects it with the main hall above.

PRINCIPAL STORY.

The principal floor, and the floors of the alcoves in the large hall, as well as the basement floor, are constructed with iron girders and beams, with segmental brick arches turned between the beams.

The entire upper story is occupied by the large hall for the reference library. This hall is finished in the Roman Corinthian ornate style. It has a clear space of *thirty-eight feet wide, ninety-two feet long, and fifty-eight feet high*. This space is surrounded by three tiers of alcoves, thirty of which are arranged on each side. Each alcove is *nine feet wide, fourteen feet deep, and twelve feet high*, in the clear. On both ends of the hall are two corridors, to correspond in height with the alcoves.

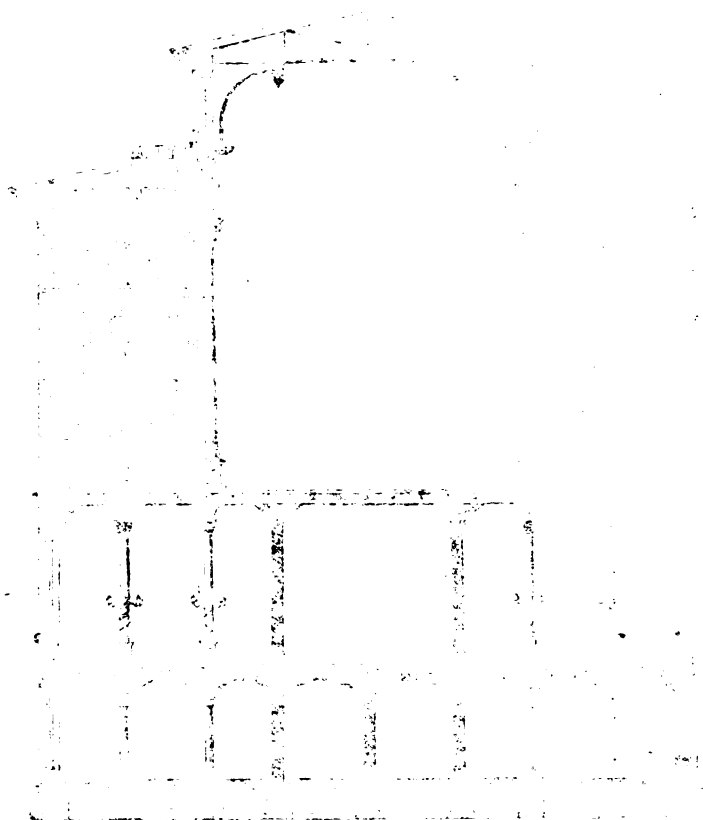
The partitions between the alcoves are faced with three quarters diameter, full, enriched Corinthian columns, standing upon pedestals of the finest Italian marble, highly polished. The columns, capitals, bases and pedestals, occupy nearly the height of the three stories of alcoves and support semi-circular arches, with rich archivolts, keystones, etc. These, in turn, support a full, rich Corinthian cornice, without an architrave, whereon rests the lantern. The lantern is finished with coved angles, having perpendicular, circular-headed windows, with arches intersecting the coved angles and separated by heavy ribs, supporting a deeply sunk diamond-panel ceiling, relieved with richly carved mouldings, pendent drops, etc.

The floor of the clear space is of marble, and that of the alcoves is of the best southern pine, bedded in cement, on brick arches. The alcoves will contain more than two hundred thousand volumes, but only those on the floor of the hall are now shelved for books. Each alcove, besides being lighted from the clear space, is also illuminated by a skylight, admitting direct light from the roof of the building. As the alcoves are constructed, in the rear, in the form of a V, there are no dark corners. All the alcoves are enclosed by iron railings in front, and have openings for the free passage, from one to another, of persons connected with the library. There are four flights of circular iron stairs connecting the several tiers of alcoves and galleries.

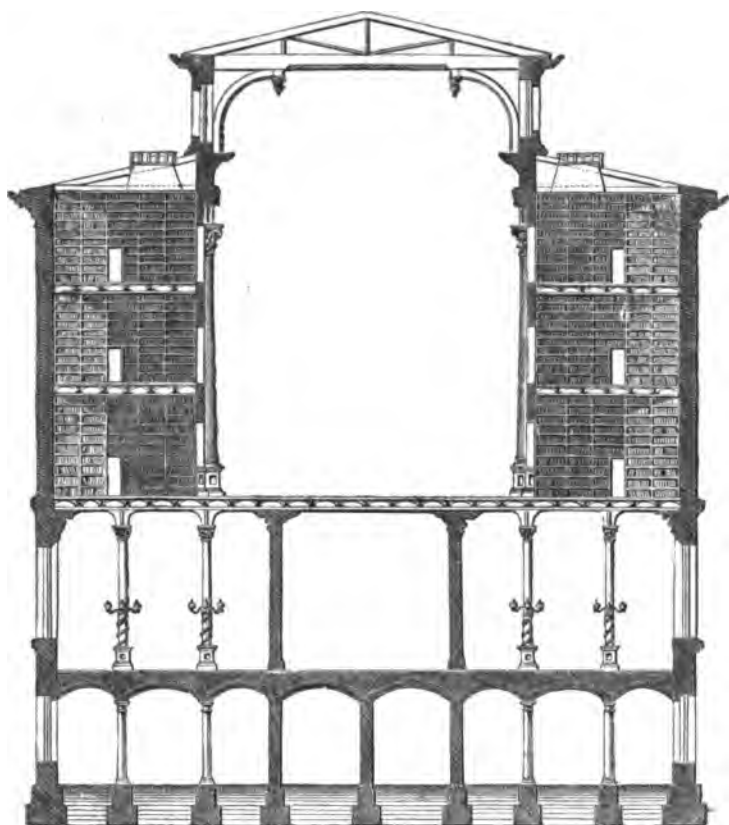
In front of the northern balcony is a large marble-faced time-keeper, and at the southern end of the hall is the seal of the City of Boston, beautifully and correctly engraved. Over the seal is a splendid bust of JOSHUA BATES, the noble benefactor of the institution.

SHELVES.

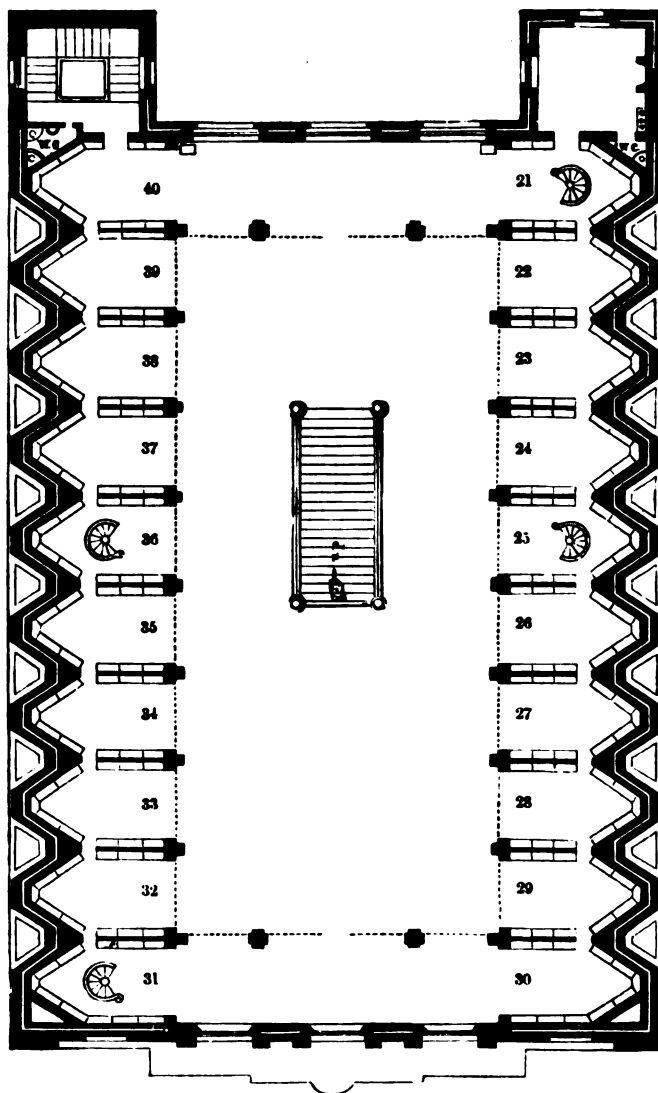
All the shelves in the building are of wood, and are covered with a fireproof solution of glass.



TRANSVERSE SECTION



TRANSVERSE SECTION.



PRINCIPAL FLOOR.

By a vote of the Trustees, the shelves are permanently fixed in their places, and are arranged upon a plan called "the decimal system," invented and applied, several years since, to the Public Library, by Dr. NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF, one of the Trustees and Commissioners. This arrangement of the books is peculiar to the library, and has been partially in operation at the temporary library rooms in Mason street, from the first institution of the library. Besides the alcoves on the floor of the principal hall, there are to be, in each of the two galleries, an equal number. The hall is so contrived that it will have ten alcoves on each of its sides, and the same number in each of its galleries, making sixty alcoves in all. Each alcove will contain ten ranges of shelves, and each range ten shelves, making just one hundred shelves to each alcove.

The shelves are so numbered, that the figures in the place of hundreds denote the alcoves, the figures in the place of tens the ranges, and the figures in the place of units the shelves. By this means, a book, if in place, can be found almost instantly. For instance, if a book is on the 2236th shelf, any one will know that it can be found on the 6th shelf of the 3d range of the 22d alcove. The figure in the place of thousands will show where the row of ten alcoves to which it belongs can be found. As there are twenty alcoves in the lower hall, all under the figure 1 in the place of thousands will show that the alcove is among the ten on the floor; and all under figure 2 and over 1 will show the alcoves in the gallery of the same hall. Again, all under figure 3 and over 2, in the same position, will show the first row of alcoves in the principal hall, those under 4 the second row, etc. The object of this decimal arrangement of shelves is to render the library more manageable than it could be under any other plan now in use, and also to simplify all the details connected with its administration.

THE TOWERS.

The west tower is six stories high. The lower story is of the same height with the basement, and, with certain other rooms, is for the Janitor and his family. The second and third stories, of the same height with the first story of the main building, are approached from the floor and balcony of the circulating library room, and are for the Librarian. The remaining three stories are included within the height of the principal hall, with floors corresponding to those of the alcoves and galleries. These will be used as rooms for the Trustees, and the general purposes of the library. The east tower is occupied by an iron staircase, arranged upon its sides and ascending from the ground floor to that of the upper gallery of the large hall. The space in the centre is intended to be used for hoisting boxes, etc.

The erection of the entire building occupied about two and a half years. The first stone of the foundation was laid on the twenty-fifth day of June, 1855, and the last was placed in the cornice at the top of the walls, on the seventh of August, 1856. The execution of the contracts for the interior finish, painting, etc., was completed in December, 1857.

EXPENDITURES ON ACCOUNT OF THE LAND AND BUILDING.

THE LAND.

The cost of the four lots of land was,	\$107,627 00
The cost of draining, grading, and other preparatory operations, was	1,603 34
The cost of repairing adjoining houses, according to the terms of purchase, together with fences, sidewalks, paving, etc., was .	7,352 42
Total,	<u><u>\$116,582 76</u></u>

THE BUILDING.

The expenditures connected with the erection of the building were as follows: for

Masonry, including the cost of furnishing and laying about three and a quarter millions of bricks, twenty-one thousand feet of sandstone, six thousand feet of hammered granite, and nine hundred perches of rough stone,	\$99,585 77
Wrought and cast iron work, including iron shutters and doors,	48,001 91
Carpenters' and joiners' work,	34,857 09
Plaster and stucco work,	13,203 92
Marble work and tiles,	11,867 30
Painting, glazing and decorating,	9,395 58
Copper roofs, gutters and conductors,	8,192 04
Plans, models and superintendence,	5,087 00
Furniture and fixtures of various kinds,	4,543 33
Warming and ventilating apparatus,	3,816 44
Gas-pipes and fixtures,	2,860 38
Incidental expenses, such as fuel, printing, insurance, care of building, and all charges not included under other heads,	2,060 44
Glass for windows and skylights,	1,025 51
Plumbing work,	744 75
Papering walls,	708 10
Soapstone work,	414 92
Lightning conductors,	354 76
Compensation of surveyors,	248 56
Expenses attending the laying of the corner-stone,	83 27
Total,	<hr/> \$247,051 07
Add cost of land and preparation,	116,582 76
Total expenditures for land and building, . .	<hr/> <hr/> \$363,633 83

REPLIES TO INVITATIONS.

Letters were sent by the committee having the matter in charge, inviting the participation of the public functionaries of the neighboring cities and of the commonwealth, and also to the principal United States officers residing in Boston, as well as to various literary associations, and gentlemen having a special interest in the objects of the occasion, enclosing tickets of admission to the library building for the day of the dedication.

Many of the persons to whom these invitations of the Committee of Arrangements were addressed, responded by their presence at the ceremonies. From many others, letters were received from which the following are selected, being all that the limits of this work will permit.

Letter from his Excellency, HENRY J. GARDNER, Governor of the Commonwealth.

BOSTON, DEC. 29, 1857.

Hon. Oliver Frost, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements for the dedication of the Public Library Building.

DEAR SIR:—I have the honor of acknowledging the receipt of the invitation of the Committee of Arrangements to be present, with my staff, at the dedicatory services of the Free Public Library Building, on the 1st proximo.

It will give me much pleasure to witness the completion of so noble a public undertaking, in the earlier and feeble commencement of which it was my privilege to participate, some years since, while connected with the municipal government of our city. I trust some members of my staff, also, will be able to accompany me.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

HENRY J. GARDNER.

Letter from Hon. ASAHEL HUNTINGTON.

SALEM, JAN. 1, 1858.

To Oliver Frost, Esq., Chairman Com. of Arrangements.

DEAR SIR:—I have had the honor to receive your polite invitation to be present to-day at the dedicatory services of your Public Library, an institution in your city which will mark an important epoch in its history.

Your city is famous in the country, and is fast becoming so throughout the civilized world, for all manner of good institutions, designed and adapted to ameliorate and elevate the condition of the body politic. The first day of the new year is aptly appointed for the inauguration of the Public Library. I very much regret that official duties in court will prevent my being present.

Yours, very respectfully,

ASAHEL HUNTINGTON.

Letter from Hon. FRANCIS B. FAY, Mayor of the City of Chelsea.

MAYOR'S OFFICE, CHELSEA, DEC. 30, 1857.

Messrs. Oliver Frost and others, Committee.

GENTS:—I have the pleasure to acknowledge your very kind invitation to be present at the dedication of the Public Library, in your city, on Friday next.

It is with extreme regret that I inform you that the present city government of this city close their labors on that evening, and my absence on that occasion would, probably, be regarded as improper. This will deprive me of the great pleasure it would afford me to witness your very interesting ceremony.

There are few subjects I regard of higher importance than that public libraries, furnished gratuitously for the use of the whole people, should be established in every city and town.

I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

FRANCIS B. FAY.

COMMISSIONERS ON THE ERECTION OF THE BUILDING.

ROBERT C. WINTHROP, } From December 20, 1854, to
 SAMUEL G. WARD, } April 27, 1858.
 NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF, }

JOSEPH A. POND, from April 14, 1855, to April 27, 1858.

PELHAM BONNEY, from Jan. 30, 1856, to April 27, 1858.

EDWARD EVERETT, from May 24, 1856, to April 27, 1858.

WILLIAM PARKMAN, from Jan. 28, 1857, to April 27, 1858.

GEORGE TICKNOR, from Dec. 20, 1854, to May 22, 1856.

GEORGE ODIORNE, from Dec. 20, 1854, to March 26, 1855.

GEORGE W. WARREN, from Dec. 20, 1854, to April 3, 1855.

CHARLES WOODBERRY, from April 14, 1855, to Jan. 22, 1856.

EDWARD F. PORTER, from April 14, 1855, to Jan. 22, 1856.

JOSEPH BUCKLEY, from Jan. 30, 1856, to Jan. 26, 1857.

EDWARD CAPEN, Clerk of the Commission.

CHARLES K. KIRBY, Architect and Superintendent.

The various parts of the work were furnished and executed as follows:—

Masonry by Nathan Drake.

Sandstone furnished by . . . Edward F. Meany.

Granite furnished by . . . Hosley & Russell, Gilman & Goodrich.

Surveyors of brick and stone

work, David Granger, Wm. Sparrell.

Iron work by Smith, Felton & Co., Denio & Roberts.

Iron castings furnished by the East Boston Iron Company.

Carpenters' and joiners' work

by Morrison & Shaw.

Plaster and stucco work by Philip & Thomas Kelley.

Marble work by A. Wentworth & Co.

Painting and glazing by . . Lucius Newell.

Decorative painting by . . . William Schutz.
Copper Roofs by . . . Charles S. Parker.
Glass furnished by . . . Damon, Sherburne & Co.
Plumbing by . . . Strater & Buckley.
Soapstone work by . . . George H. Foote.
Gas-pipes and fixtures by . . Andrew J. Gavett, Smith &
Tarbell, S. A. Stetson &
Co., H. N. Hooper & Co.
Furniture by . . . Edward Hixon.

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR THE YEAR 1857.

EDWARD EVERETT, from 1852 to 1858.
GEORGE TICKNOR, from 1852 to 1858.
JOHN P. BIGELOW, from 1852 to 1858.
NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF, from 1852 to 1858.
OLIVER FROST, from 1854 to 1858.
WILLIAM W. GREENOUGH, from 1856 to 1858.
FREDERICK L. WASHBURN, 1857.

CONDITION OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, JANUARY 1, 1858.

Number of volumes in the library,	59,970
Number of pamphlets belonging to the library, . .	16,212
Whole number of names registered in the reading room for the general use of the library, . . .	15,699
Whole number of accounts opened for borrowing books,	14,394
Whole number of books borrowed in 1857, . . .	92,233
Average number of volumes daily borrowed, . . .	320
Largest number of books borrowed in one day, . .	730
Number of volumes, etc., received since January 1st, 1858, in response to the vote passed at the dedication of the library building,	1,471

LIBRARY FUNDS.

BIGELOW FUND. This is a donation made by Hon. JOHN P. BIGELOW, August 5, 1850, when Mayor of the City. The income from this fund is to be appropriated to the purchase of books for the increase of the library.

One certificate of City six per cent stock, payable to the Chairman of the Committee on the Public Library, for the time being, for . . \$1,000

BATES FUND. This is a donation made by JOSHUA BATES, Esq., of London, in March, 1853. The income only of this fund is to be, in each and every year, "expended in the purchase of such books of permanent value and authority as may be found most needed and most useful."

One certificate of City six per cent. stock, payable to the Mayor of the City, for the time being, for 50,000

PHILLIPS FUND. This is a donation made by Hon. JONATHAN PHILLIPS, of Boston, in April, 1853. The interest on this fund is to "be used exclusively for the purchase of books for said library."

One certificate of City six per cent. stock, payable to the Mayor of the City, for the time being, for 10,000

Besides the above, the following donations in money have been made to the Public Library, and the amounts have been appropriated to the purchase of books, according to the intention of the donors:

JAMES BROWN, June 28, 1852, \$500
SAMUEL APPLETON, September 24, 1852, 1,000

CONTRIBUTORS OF BOOKS, ETC.

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JAMES NIGHTINGALE, March 5, 1853,	\$100
NATHANIEL I. BOWDITCH, November 4, 1853, value,	200
J. INGERSOLL BOWDITCH, December 4, 1853,	300
Mrs. SALLY INMAN KAST SHEPARD, September 17, 1855,	1,000
Also, a bequest of the late Hon. ABBOTT LAWRENCE, dated January 27, 1855, not yet received by the City Treasurer,	10,000

CONTRIBUTORS OF BOOKS, ETC., TO JANUARY 1, 1858.

Adams George	Amer. Tract Society
Adams Nehemiah	Amer. Unitarian Association
Albany Young Men's Association	Anderson Paul, Cincinnati
Alger William R.	Andrews Joseph
Allen Edward, London	Appleton John W. M.
Allen John Fiske, Salem	Appleton Samuel
Allen William, Northampton	Appleton Thomas G.
Amer. Antiquarian Society	Appleton William
Amer. Asso. for adv. of Science	Athenæum Club, London
Amer. Board of Com. for F. M.	Austin Edward
	Austin James T.
Balch Thomas, Philadelphia	Bigelow Henry J.
Balfour David M.	Bigelow Jacob
Ball William T. W.	Bigelow John P.
Ballard & Prince	Binney C. J. F.
Ballou Maturin M.	Binney Horace, Philadelphia
Barker James M.	Bishop Nathan
Barnard Henry, Connecticut	Bolles John A.
Barrows H. G.	Boltwood Lucius M., Amherst
Bartlett St. John & Co.	Bond William C., Cambridge
Bartlett J. R., Providence	Boston, City of
Batchelder S., Cambridge	Boston, England
Bates Isaac C.	Boston Mercantile Library Asso.
Bates Joshua, London	Boston Prison Discipline Society
Bates Joshua, Mrs., London	Boston Soc. for Med. Observat'n

Boston Soc. of Natural History	Bradlee John N.
Boston Y. M. Christian Union	Bradlee Samuel
Boutwell George S.	Brooks Peter C.
Bowditch Library Proprietors	Brown Obadiah, Trustees of
Bowditch Henry I.	Brown William S.
Bowditch J. Ingersoll	Browne George M.
Bowditch Nathaniel, children of	Buchanan A.
Bowditch Nathaniel I.	Buck Ephraim
Bradford Charles F.	Buckley Joseph
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